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LIFE AND PUBLIC SERVICES

OF

MAJOR-GEN. ZACHARY TAYLOR.



ALSO,

THE LIFE AND SERVICES

OF THE

HON. MILLARD FILLMORE.

Embellished with Numerous Engravings.

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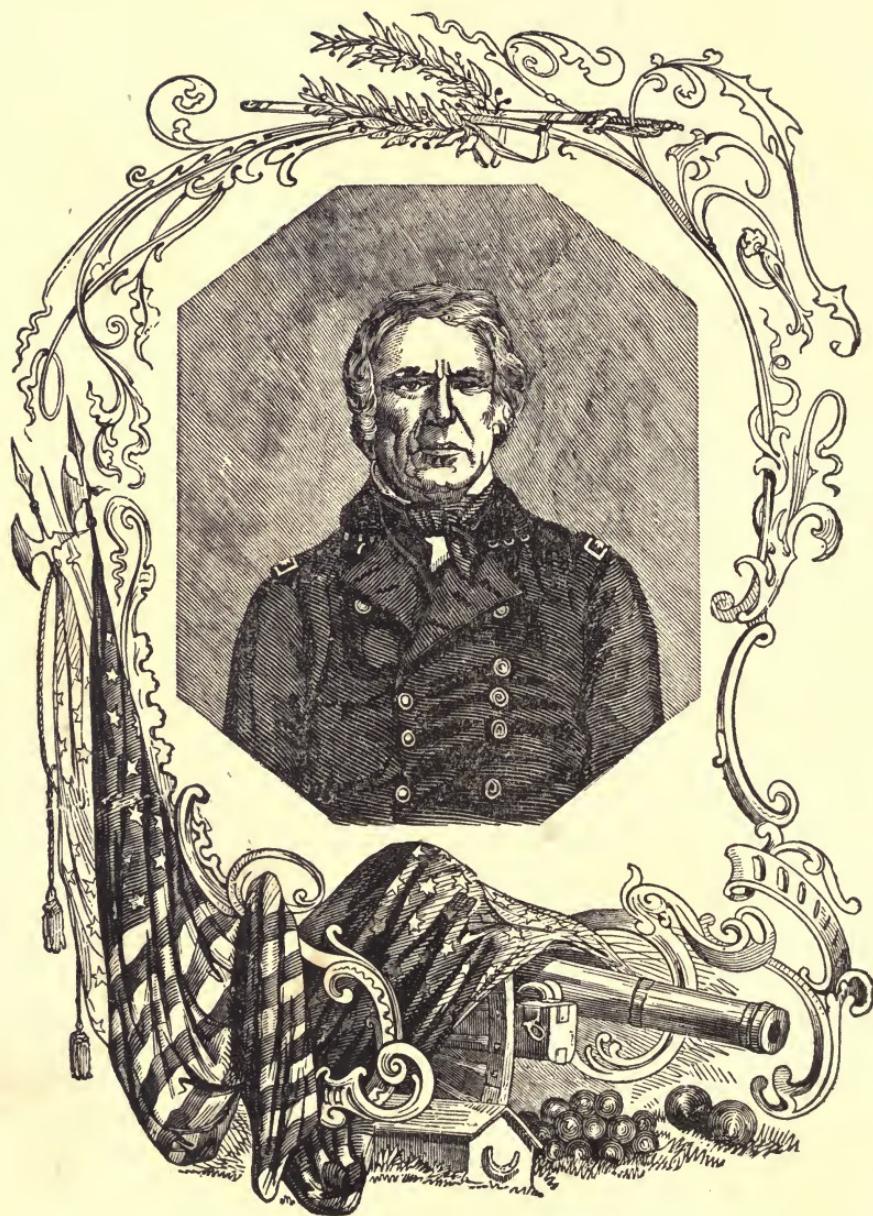
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LIFE OF TAYLOR.



AMONG the distinguished military commanders who have signalized themselves in the annals of our country, by consummate ability, lofty patriotism and eminent services, few will bear comparison with the subject of the present memoir.

GENERAL ZACHARY TAYLOR was born in Orange county, Virginia, in November, 1784. His father, Colonel Richard Taylor, soon after the birth of Zachary, removed his residence to Kentucky, and settled near Louisville.

At the age of six years, Zachary Taylor was placed under a private tutor, Mr. Ayres, who was peculiarly fitted for the task of instruction, and gave that true direction to the dawning powers of his pupil which subsequent events have so signally evinced.



DEFENCE OF FORT HARRISON.

With respect to the General's youth, all accounts agree in describing it as one of rare promise for a military man. He early showed a predilection for the exercises and accomplishments which become a soldier; and he clearly exhibited those traits of character which a soldier's life demands.

His desire to enter the army was gratified by his father, whose influence obtained for him, in the year 1808, a lieutenancy in the Seventh Regiment of infantry of the United States army. This period was one in which the irritation of our countrymen against Great Britain, in consequence of her impressments of seamen and seizure of merchant vessels under orders in council, was greatly aggravated by the outrageous attack on the frigate Chesapeake. Every thing portended an immediate war.

Before the war broke out, in 1812, he had risen to the rank of captain, and being ordered for service in the western country, he was engaged in repelling the border warfare of the Indians, which immediately succeeded the fall of Detroit and the surrender of General Hull's army.

The first notice which we find in the history of the war of Captain Taylor's operations, is the account of his splendid defence of Fort Harrison.

Captain Taylor, commander at Fort Harrison, says Mr. Palmer, having received information of the approach of the hostile Indians a short time before they made their appearance, had used every precaution that the smallness of his garrison would admit of. The first hostile symptoms appeared on the evening of the 3d of September, when two young men, who had been employed a short distance from the fort, were shot and scalped, and were found in that condition the next morning by a small party that had

been sent out to seek them. This circumstance caused them to redouble their vigilance ; and the officers of the guard were directed to walk the round all night, in order, if possible, to prevent any surprise.

About 11 o'clock on the evening of the 4th, the garrison being alarmed by the firing of one of the sentinels, every man instantly flew to his post. In a few minutes the cry of fire added to the alarm ; when it was discovered that the lower block-house, in which had been deposited the property of the contractor, had been fired by the Indians. Such was the darkness of the night, that although the upper part of the building was occupied by a corporal's guard as an alarm post, yet the Indians succeeded in firing it undiscovered, and unfortunately, a few minutes after the discovery of the fire, it communicated to a quantity of whisky that had been deposited there, and immediately ascended to the roof, baffling every effort that was made to extinguish it. As the block-house adjoined the barracks, which constituted part of the fortifications, most of the men gave themselves up for lost ; and, indeed, the raging of the fire, the yells of the Indians, and the cries of the women and children, (who had taken refuge in the fort) were sufficient to appal the stoutest heart. Happily the presence of mind of the commander never forsook him. He instantly stationed a part of his men on the roof of the barracks, with orders to tear off that part adjoining the block-house, while the remainder kept up a constant fire on the Indians from another block-house and two bastions. The roof was torn off under a shower of bullets from without, by which, however, only one man was killed, and two wounded.

By this success the soldiers were inspired with firmness, and now used such exertions, that before day they had not only extinguished the fire, but raised a breast-work five or six feet high in the gap occasioned by the burning of the block-house, although the Indians continued to pour in a heavy fire of ball and showers of arrows during the whole time the attack lasted, (which was seven hours,) in every part of the parade.

On the first appearance of the fire, two of the soldiers had, in despair, jumped the pickets. One of them returned about an hour before day, and, running up towards the gate, begged for God's sake that it might be opened. On suspicion that it was an Indian stratagem, he was fired at. He then ran to the other bastion, where, his voice being known, he was directed to lie down till day-light behind an empty barrel that happened to be outside of the pickets. This poor fellow was shockingly wounded, and his companion cut to pieces by the Indians.

After keeping up a constant fire till six in the morning, which after daylight was returned with considerable effect by the garrison, the Indians retreated out of reach of the guns. They then drove together all the horses and hogs in the neighbourhood, and shot them in sight of their owners. The whole of the horned cattle they succeeded in carrying off.

In this attack the Americans had but three killed and three wounded, including the two that jumped the pickets. The Indian loss was supposed to be considerable, but as they always carry off both their dead and wounded, the amount could not be ascertained. At the moment of the attack there were only fifteen effective men in the garrison, the others being sick or convalescent.

The Indians, disheartened by this failure, made no further attempt on the fort, but the garrison still remained in a perilous situation, as the greater part of their provisions had been destroyed by the fire, and the loss of their stock prevented future supplies. Captain Taylor therefore attempted to send, by night, two men in a canoe down the river to Vincennes, to make known his situation, but they were forced to return, the river being found too well guarded. The Indians had made a fire on the bank of the river, a short distance below the garrison, which gave them an opportunity of seeing any craft that might attempt to pass, with a canoe ready below to intercept it. A more fortunate attempt was made by land, and the garrison was immediately after relieved by the force under General Hopkins, consisting of nearly 4000 men.

The gallant defence of Fort Harrison by Captain Taylor was duly appreciated by President Madison, who immediately promoted the intrepid commander to the rank of Major. During the remainder of the war of 1812 he was actively employed in the western country, but as he had no opportunity of again distinguishing himself in a separate command, we are not able to trace his movements.

After the close of the war of 1812, Major Taylor was employed in the western country at the various posts where the demands of the service required his presence. A time of peace affords few materials for biography in the life of a soldier; but it affords the soldier himself the best opportunity for completing many parts of his military education. Taylor's great eminence in every branch of the military art affords sufficient proof that this period was employed in the most diligent study, as far as the requisitions of the service would permit. And it is equally certain that his reading could not have been confined exclusively to works on the art of war. He read the finest models of English composition; and we see the results in his published despatches, which are all models of style, attracting the unbounded admiration of the first scholars of the age both in Europe and America.

In 1832 Taylor was advanced to the rank of colonel. On the commencement of war in Florida he was ordered on service in that district. This contest was, as every one knows, what General Jackson called his own Seminole war, "a war of movements." It consisted almost entirely of pursuits and attempts to surround the Indians, which they were generally successful in eluding.

Colonel Taylor, however, was more fortunate than his predecessors; and in December, 1837, he was able to bring on a general action at Okee-Chobee.

This battle (says Frost in his life of Taylor) was fought between the Americans, under Colonel Taylor, and the Seminoles and Mickasukies, commanded by their chiefs, Alligator and Sam Jones. The United States army had now been in the Florida service for two years, and the colonel commanded the first brigade, stationed at Fort Gardner, south of the Withlacoochee. On the 19th of December he received a communication from Major-General Jesup, informing him that all hopes of bringing the war to a close by negotiation through the interference or mediation of the Cherokee delegation, were at an end, and that Sam Jones, with the Mickasukies, had determined to "fight to the last." It also directed him to proceed with the least possible delay, against any portion of the enemy he might hear of, and to destroy or capture them.

The next morning after receiving this communication, the colonel left an adequate force under two officers, to protect the depot, and marched with the remainder of his command, having with him but twelve days' rations, his means of transportation not enabling him to carry more. His force was composed of Captain Morris's company of the fourth artillery, consisting of thirty-five men: the first infantry under Colonel Davenport, one hundred and ninety-seven strong; the fourth infantry under Lieutenant-Colonel Foster, two hundred and seventy-four; the Missouri volunteers, one hundred and eighty; Morgan's spies, forty-seven; and thirty pioneers, thirteen pontoniers, and seventy Delaware Indians; making in all, exclusive of officers, one thousand and thirty-two men. The greater part of the Shawnees had been detached, and the remainder refused to accompany him, under pretext that many of them were sick, and the rest without moccasins.



HE army moved down the west side of the Kissimmee, in a southern course, towards Lake Istopoga. The colonel was induced to take this route for several reasons. He had learned that a portion of the enemy were in that direction, and imagined that if General Jesup should fall in with the Mickasukies and drive them before him, they might attempt to escape by crossing the Kissimmee, from the east to the west side of the peninsula, between Fort Gardner and its entrance into Okee-Chobee, in which case he might be near at hand to intercept them. He also wished to overawe such of the Indians as had been making propositions to give themselves up, but had been slow

to fulfil their promise ; to erect block-houses and a small picket-work on the Kissimmee, forty or fifty miles below the fort, for a third depot. By this means he hoped to obtain a knowledge of the country, as he had no guide to rely on, and also to open a communication with Colonel Smith, who was operating by his orders, up the Caloosehatchee or Sanybel river.

In the evening of his first day's march, Colonel Taylor met the Indian Chief Jumper, with his family and a part of his band, consisting of fifteen men, some of them with families and a few negroes, on his way to deliver himself up in conformity to a previous arrangement with the Colonel. The whole consisted of sixty-three persons, and were conducted by Captain Parks, a half-breed, at the head of the friendly Indians, both Shawnees and Delawares. The army encamped that night near the spot, and the next morning having sent on Jumper and his party to Fort Frazer, the Colonel continued his march, at the same time sending forward three Seminoles to gain intelligence concerning the position of the enemy. About noon of the same day he sent forward one battalion of Gentry's regiment, under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Price, who was ordered "to pick up any stragglers that might fall in his way ; to encamp two or three miles in advance of the main force ; to act with great circumspection, and to communicate promptly any occurrence of importance that might take place in his vicinity."

About ten o'clock in the morning, Taylor received a note from Colonel Price, stating that the three Seminoles sent forward in the morning had returned ; that they had been near where Alligator had encamped, twelve or fifteen miles in advance of his present position ; that Alligator had left there with a part of his family, four days before, under pretext of separating his friends and relatives from the Mickasukies, preparatory to his surrendering with them ; that there were several families remaining at the camp referred to, who wished to give themselves up, and would remain there until Colonel Taylor took possession of them, but who were in great danger of being carried away that night by the Mickasukies, who were encamped at no great distance from them.

In consequence of this intelligence, Colonel Taylor put himself at the head of his mounted men, a little after midnight, and after directing Lieutenant-colonel Davenport to follow him early in the morning, he commenced his march, joined Price, crossed Istopoga outlet, and soon after daylight took possession at the encampment referred to, and had the satisfaction to find that the inmates, amounting in all to twenty-two individuals, had not been disturbed. One of their number informed him that Alligator was anxious to deliver himself up ; and this individual, who was an old man, was subsequently employed in a mission to inform the chief that if sincere in his professions he should have a conference next day, at a place designated on the Kissimmee.

Upon the arrival of Colonel Davenport with the infantry, Colonel Taylor moved on to the place of meeting with Alligator, near which, as he reached it late in the evening, he encamped. At eleven o'clock, the old Indian returned, bringing a very equivocal message from Alligator, whom, according to his report, he met accidentally. He also stated that the Mickasukies were still encamped on the opposite side of the river, where they had remained for some days, with a determination to fight the United States troops. In this humour, the colonel determined to indulge them as soon as possible. Accordingly, the next morning he took the old Indian for his guide, crossed the Kissimmee, and reached Alligator's encampment, which was situated on the edge of "Cabbage Tree Hammock," in the midst of a large prairie. From the appearance of this and other encampments in the vicinity, together with the many evidences of slaughtered cattle, it was evident that the population must have numbered several hundreds.

Before Taylor commenced this march, he had laid out a small stockade fort for the protection of a future dépôt, and left the pioneers, pontoneers, eighty-five sick and disabled infantry, and a portion of the friendly Indians, together with all his artillery and heavy baggage, under the protection of Captain Monroe. This enabled him to move much faster than if encumbered by wounded and baggage, and brought him nearly on a level with his wary enemy.

Soon after the arrival, the spies surprised another encampment situated at a small distance from the first, in the midst of a swamp. It contained a small party of young men, one old one, and some women and children, who raised a white flag, and were taken prisoners. They were Seminoles, and informed Colonel Taylor that the Mickasukies, headed by A-vi-a-ka, (Sam Jones,) were at the distance of about twelve miles, securely encamped in a swamp, and prepared to fight. Upon receiving this information, the commander dismissed the old man, and, after making provision for those who came in, moved forward under guidance of the Seminoles, toward the camp of the Mickasukies.

Between the hours of two and three in the afternoon, the army reached a very dense cypress swamp, through which they passed with great difficulty, and under a continual apprehension of an attack from a concealed foe. The necessary dispositions for battle were arranged at the same time; but the soldiers crossed without gaining sight of the enemy, and encamped for the night on the opposite side. During the passage of the rear, Captain Parks, who was in advance with a few friendly Indians, encountered two of the enemy's spies, and succeeded in capturing one of them, who was on foot. He was a young warrior of great activity, armed with an excellent rifle, fifty balls in his pouch, and an adequate proportion of powder. This Indian confirmed the information previously received from

other prisoners, and, in addition, stated that a large body of Seminoles, headed by John Cohua, Coacoochee, Alligator, and other chiefs, was encamped five or six miles from the Americans, near the Mickasukies, the latter being separated by a cypress swamp and a dense hammock.

The army moved forward at daylight the next morning, and after marching five or six miles reached another cypress swamp, on the borders of which was a deserted camp of the Seminoles. It had evidently contained several hundred persons, and exhibited very plain manifestations of having been abandoned in a hurry, as several fires were still burning, and quantities of beef lying on the ground unconsumed.

Upon reaching this encampment the troops were again arranged in order of battle, and again disappointed in their expectation of seeing an enemy. After remaining for some time, they crossed the swamp and entered a large prairie in their front, on which two or three hundred cattle, and a number of Indian ponies were grazing. Here was captured another young warrior, armed and equipped like the former. He pointed to a dense hammock on the right, about a mile distant, in which he said the Indians were situated, and waiting to give battle.

In this place the final disposition was made for an attack. The army was drawn up in two lines; Morgan's spies and the volunteers under Gentry, in extended order, formed the first line, with instructions to enter the hammock, and if attacked and hard pressed, to fall back in the rear of the regular troops, out of the reach of the enemy's fire; the second line was composed of the fourth and sixth infantry, who were instructed to sustain the volunteers. The first infantry was held in reserve.

These arrangements being completed, the whole force moved on in the direction of the hammock, and after proceeding about a quarter of a mile reached the swamp, on the opposite side of which the enemy were stationed. This was three-quarters of a mile wide, extending on the left as far as the eye could reach, and on the right to a part of the swamp and hammock they had just crossed, through which ran a deep creek. It consisted of an oozy mass of mud and water nearly two feet deep, over which waved a thick growth of coarse "saw-grass," as tall as a man, and was utterly impassable to cavalry, and nearly so to foot. In consequence of this, all the men were dismounted at the edge of the swamp, and the horses and baggage left under a suitable guard. At the same time Captain Allen was detached with the two companies of mounted infantry to examine the swamp and hammock to the right; and in case of not finding the enemy in that direction, to return to the baggage; but in either case if he heard a heavy firing, immediately to join Colonel Taylor.

These arrangements being satisfactorily completed, the army crossed the swamp in order of battle. The volunteers and spies had scarcely reached the borders of the swamp, when a heavy fire was opened upon them by a



BATTLE OF OKEE-CHOEBEE.

large body of Indians. This was returned for a short time with considerable spirit, but they soon lost their gallant commander, Colonel Gentry, who fell mortally wounded. After this misfortune they fled in disorder, and instead of forming in the rear of the regulars; as had been directed, they retired across the swamp, to their baggage and horses ; nor would they again enter into action as a body, although efforts were made by Colonel Taylor's staff to induce them to do so. At this success, the Indians rushed forward upon the second line, at the same time discharging a heavy fire of musketry. They were, however, coolly met and driven back by the fourth and sixth infantry. The heat of battle was principally borne by five companies of the latter ; yet they not only sustained it firmly, but continued to advance until their commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Thompson and his adjutant, Lieutenant Carter, were killed ; they were then obliged to retire for a short distance, and re-form. So great had been the loss of these companies, that every officer, with a single exception, together with most of the non-commissioned, including the sergeant-major and four of the orderly sergeants, was killed or wounded ; and one of them had but *four* members uninjured.

Lieutenant-Colonel Foster, with six companies, amounting in all to one hundred and sixty men, gained the hammock in good order, where he was joined by Captain Noel, with the two remaining companies of the sixth infantry, and Captain Gillam, of Gentry's volunteers, with a few additional men. These, by a change of front, succeeded in separating the enemy's line, and continued to drive them until they reached the lake Okee-Chobee, which was in the rear of the enemy's position, and bordered their encamp-

ment for nearly a mile. As soon as Colonel Taylor was informed that Captain Allen was advancing, he ordered the first infantry to move to the left, gain the enemy's right flank, and turn it. This order was excecuted with promptness and effect; as soon as the regiment got into position the Indians gave one fire and retreated, being pursued by the first, fourth, and sixth, and some few volunteers, until near night. This chase was a most fatiguing one, as the enemy scattered in all directions, and the troops were obliged to follow over a swampy and rugged surface.

This action was long and severe, continuing from half-past twelve until about three, p. m. The Indians had selected the strongest position of the swamp, and were covered in front by a small stream, whose quicksands rendered it almost impassable. In addition to this, their front was concealed and partly protected by a growth of thickly interwoven hammock, and their flanks were secured by impassable swamps. They numbered about seven hundred warriors, and were led by Alligator, Coacoochee, and Sam Jones.

Colonel Taylor's force amounted to about five hundred men, only part of whom were regulars. In passing the stream they sunk to the middle in mire, and were continually exposed to the fire of the enemy; and for a while during the battle, both parties fought hand to hand. The Americans lost twenty-six killed, and one hundred and twelve wounded. Among the slain were Colonels Gentry and Thompson, Captain Van Swearingen, and Lieutenants Carter and Brook, all of whom fell at the head of their respective commands. The loss of the Indians was never ascertained; they left ten bodies on the field, and doubtless carried away a large number, according to their invariable practice. During the whole engagement the Colonel was on horseback, passing from point to point, and cheering his men, though he himself was exposed to the complete range of the Indian rifles.

As soon as the enemy were thoroughly broken, Colonel Taylor turned his attention to the wounded. He had previously ordered an encampment to be formed near his baggage; and to facilitate his operations, he directed Captain Taylor to cross to that spot and employ every individual whom he might find there, in constructing a small footway across the swamp. By great exertions this was completed a short time after dark, when all the dead and wounded, with the exception of the body of a private, which could not be found, were carried across in litters.

In speaking of this disastrous though successful action, Colonel Taylor, in his official communication to the department, says:—"I trust that I may be permitted to say, that I experienced one of the most trying scenes of my life, and he who could have looked on it with indifference, his nerves must have been very differently organized from my own. Besides the killed, there lay one hundred and twelve wounded officers and soldiers,

who had accompanied me one hundred and forty-five miles, most of the way through an unexplored wilderness, without guides, who had so gallantly beat the enemy, under my orders, in his strongest position, and who had to be conveyed back through swamps and hammocks, from whence we set out, without any apparent means of doing it. This service, however, was encountered and overcome, and they have been conveyed thus far, and proceeded on to Tampa Bay, on rude litters, constructed with the axe and knife alone, with poles and dry hides; the latter being found in great abundance at the encampment of the hostiles. The litters were conveyed on the backs of our weak and tottering horses, aided by the residue of the command, with more ease and comfort to the sufferers than I could have supposed; and with as much as they could have been in ambulances of the most improved and modern construction."

The day after the battle, Colonel Taylor and his command remained at their encampment, occupied in taking care of the wounded, and in the sad office of interring the dead. They also prepared litters for the removal of the wounded, and detached a portion of the mounted men to collect the horses and cattle which had been left by the enemy. Of the former they found about a hundred, many of which were saddled, and three hundred oxen.

The battle of Okee-Chobee had a very beneficial influence upon the efforts to subdue the Indians of Florida. An officer writing from Fort Bassinger subsequent to it, says:—"The Indian prisoners now admit that they lost twenty killed on the ground, and a great many wounded, in the fight with Colonel Taylor. They had a strong position and fought well, but were terribly whipped, and have never returned near the ground since. Jumper, Alligator, and other warriors afterwards came in, and were subsequently employed by the colonel in inducing their hostile companions to surrender themselves; by this means, large numbers delivered themselves to the Americans. Indeed, the general policy pursued by Colonel Taylor while in Florida, together with his industry and perseverance, and the hardy constitution he possessed, rendered his services immensely valuable to the government in subduing the savages, and giving peace and safety to the southern frontier. The country was not insensible of his value, and the department at Washington conferred on him the rank of brigadier-general by brevet, to take date from the battle of Okee-Chobee.

Taylor now established himself at Fort Bassinger, on the Kissimmee, about twenty miles west of Fort Lloyd. On the 1st of March following, Mr. Poinsett, Secretary of War, wrote to Major-general Jesup a letter, of which the following is an extract:—

"The department indulge the hope, that with the extensive means placed at your disposal, the war, by a vigorous effort, might be brought to

a close this campaign. If, however, you are of opinion, that, from the nature of the country and the character of the enemy, such a result is impracticable, and that it is advisable to make a temporary arrangement with the Seminoles, by which the safety of the settlements and the posts will be secured throughout the summer, you are at liberty to do so. In that event, you will establish posts at Tampa and on the eastern shore, and wherever else they are, in your opinion, necessary to preserve the peace of the country; and I would suggest the propriety of leaving Colonel Zachary Taylor, of the first infantry, in command of them."

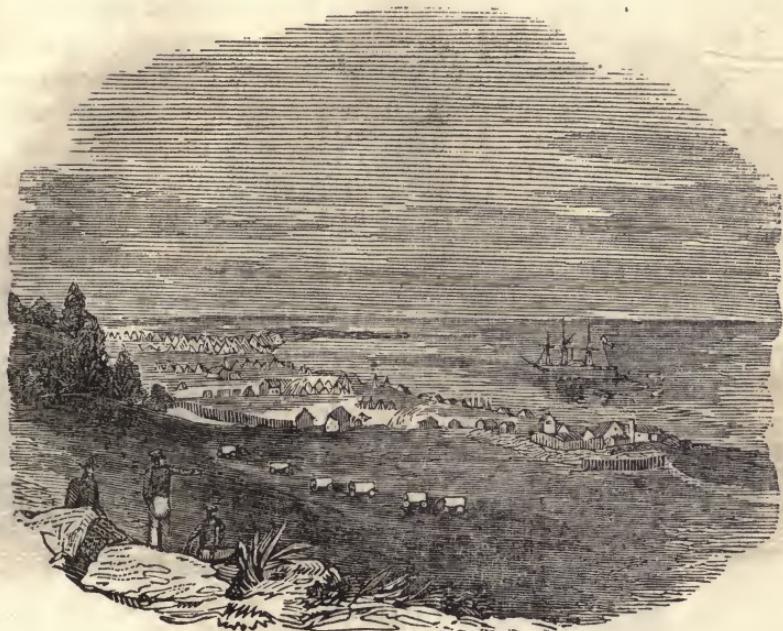
Accordingly, Colonel Taylor received the command of the posts along the frontier.

General Jesup having reported that the operations in Florida would probably terminate on the 1st of May, the adjutant-general issued a "general order" on the 10th of April, 1838, making such a disposition of the forces as seemed necessary. The fifth article of this paper reads as follows:—

"Major-general Jesup will take all the necessary orders for the prompt execution of this order, and will then turn over the command of the troops in Florida to Brevet Brigadier-general Z. Taylor, colonel of the first infantry and—resume the duties of quartermaster-general."

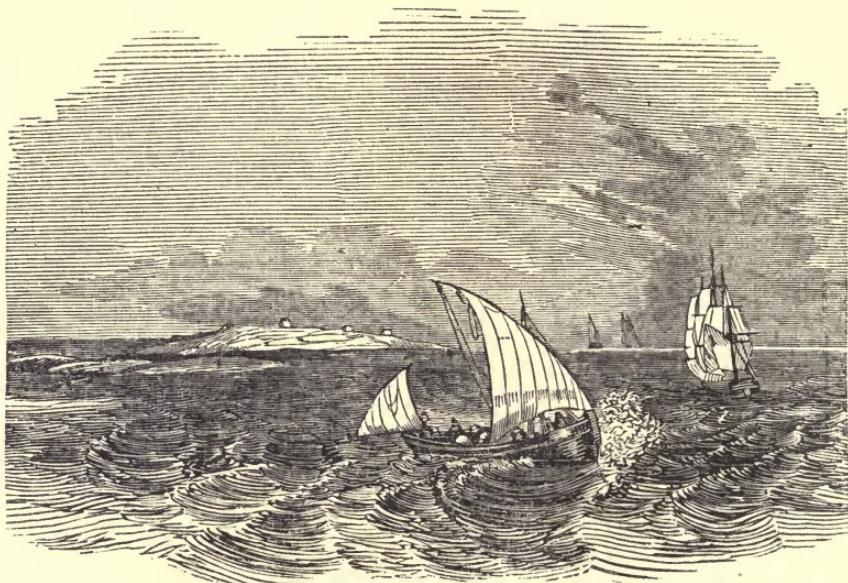
Agreeably to this order, General Taylor assumed the command of the Florida army, in the following May. Here he remained until 1840, when, upon requesting leave to retire, he was relieved by Brigadier-general Armistead, and, with his family, arrived in New Orleans on the 21st of June.

When it was determined by the administration to send an army to the frontiers of Texas, General Taylor was selected to command it. He was (we are informed) requested by the War Department to withdraw an application for a furlough which he had previously filed, and which, from his uninterrupted services, the courtesy and custom of the department could scarcely have denied him. Ever self-sacrificing, and always scrupulously attentive to even the shadow of duty, he gave up his furlough, as he had before done when ordered to Florida, and entered energetically upon the work assigned him. With his career since that time—glorious and dazzling as it is—the country is familiar. Yet few, comparatively—strange as the statement may at first view appear—appreciate General Taylor as he deserves. The whole country rings with his fame—the great and small, rich and poor, delight to do him honour—scarcely a breath of detraction mingles with the homage almost universally awarded him—yet, we repeat, but few appreciate him as he deserves. Caught and blinded by the splendour of his most astonishing victories, how few consider the labours, the cares, the anxieties, the difficulties, he experienced in preparing, in organizing this expedition, in a country unprepared by



CORPUS CHRISTI.

policy, and, in fact, for entering into a campaign. How few think of the obstacles to overcome in the embarkation, upon the march, and in the camp. How few consider his feelings—his distress—when, in his camp, he saw his men destitute of the commonest necessities, dying, day after day, from disease and exposure. How few appreciate his extended views of policy, his great military plans since disclosed to us in his despatches to the War Department, written about that time. How few appreciate the readiness and ability with which he accepted and carried out the views, half-military, half-political, of the government, from the moment he landed at Corpus Christi, throughout the war, but more especially in his march to Matamoros—his conduct on the march—and his course while at Fort Brown. At the risk of his life, and that thing dearer than life, his reputation, he swerved not in the slightest degree from the spirit of the line of policy marked out for him by his government. Who would envy him his feelings while in the face of an enemy, who, he knew, could make all preparations and strike him or remain friendly, at their own election, and at whatever time and under whatever circumstances best suited them, while he must lie quiet and await the blow? Who can sufficiently praise his foresight, forbearance and endurance, when, although his camp was almost in a state of mutiny, he refrained from crushing, as he could easily have done, the small parties which first crossed the Rio Grande? Had he done so, he would have had on his hands an endless, vexatious, guerilla,



POINT ISABEL.

war, and the glorious battles of the 8th and 9th would never have been fought. As much as General Taylor deserves for those battles, (and who will say that he does not deserve greatly?) he deserves tenfold more for his conduct prior to the time when they were fought. The former showed him a general of skill, coolness, and gallantry—the latter proved him not only a soldier, but a man of energy and endurance, one who could not only *act* but *wait*; a man of strong mind, capable of extended military and political views.

On the 11th of March, 1846, the “Army of Occupation,” which had for some time been rendezvousing at Corpus Christi, broke up its encampment, and commenced its movement towards the Rio Grande. The distance to be accomplished was nearly 120 miles, which, owing to the swampy nature of the country, was a task of considerable difficulty. The army reached Point Isabel, (a bluff or promontory of 60 feet elevation, on the north side of the Rio Grande, a few miles below Matamoros, which is on the southern side of that river,) on the 24th. This place was now made the principal depot for the provisions and military stores of the army.

On the 26th, General Taylor set out from Point Isabel, leaving one company of artillery under the command of Major Monroe, and proceeded to the main body of the army, which, by his orders, had encamped opposite Matamoros.

The Mexicans manifested great anger, at this position being occupied by our army, for they considered all that territory which lies between the Rio Nueces and the Rio Grande, as a part of their own Republic.

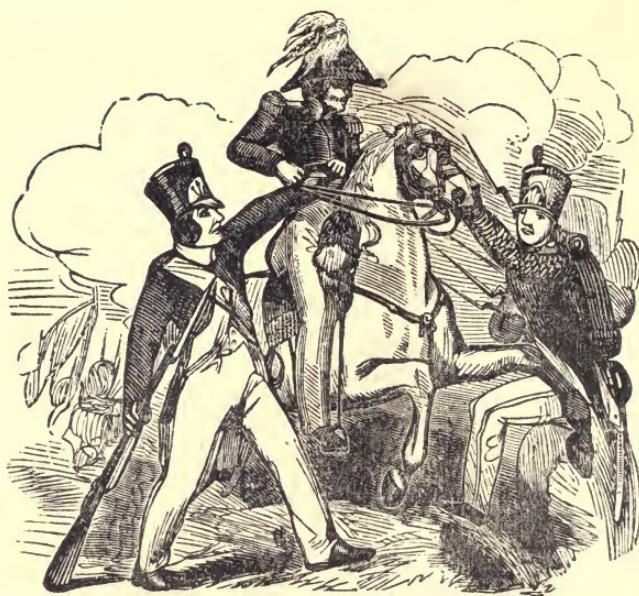


COLONEL CROSS.

On the 11th of April, General Ampudia marched into Matamoros with 1000 cavalry and 1500 infantry, and on the 12th ordered General Taylor to break up his camp and retire to the eastern side of the Rio Nueces. General Taylor replied to Ampudia that he had been instructed by the President of the United States to occupy the territory east of the Rio Grande; that he came there without any hostile intention, either towards the government or people of Mexico; and that any attempt made to dislodge him would be repelled by force; and, likewise, should he attempt to cross the river, it would be considered a hostile act, and, as such, would be resisted.

General Taylor now commenced erecting fortifications, employing 1500 or 1600 men constantly, to render the position which he had chosen secure. About this time Colonel Cross was attacked by a body of Rancheros, and cruelly murdered. This was the first life lost in the "Army of Occupation," but it was soon followed by the attack upon and killing of Lieutenant Porter and three others. This, shortly afterwards, was followed by the attack upon, and capture of Captain Thornton and party, who had been despatched by General Taylor to reconnoitre the enemy's position.

Large bodies of Mexicans were now daily crossing the Rio Grande,



CAPTURE OF COLONEL THORNTON.

both above and below General Taylor's camp ; their main object being to eject our army from the position it had assumed. From the capture of Captain Thornton and his command, all communication was cut off between Point Isabel and General Taylor's camp, for the space of three days. This was a serious misfortune, for the entire stores of the army were at Point Isabel ; and the prospect of opening a communication seemed hopeless, as the enemy, under General Arista, had assembled in great force, between these two points. On the 28th of April, Captain Walker, of the Texas Rangers, (Volunteers,) left Point Isabel, to reconnoitre the enemy, and, if possible, force his way to General Taylor's camp. He was, however, driven back ; but on the 29th he again left Point Isabel, determined to reach General Taylor's camp, or perish in the attempt. He arrived safely at the camp on the 30th, and informed General Taylor that Point Isabel was in danger daily of being attacked, as the enemy had assembled in great force in its immediate vicinity.

This intelligence determined General Taylor to proceed at once, with the main body of the army, toward that place. Leaving Major Brown at the head of 600 men, in command of the fortifications which had been erected, General Taylor set out for Point Isabel, with the remainder of his force, and arrived at that place without meeting with any opposition. The moment the Mexicans became aware of the departure of General Taylor, they opened a heavy fire on the fort, (now Fort Brown,) from their batteries ; and, although kept up for several days, did no serious injury. On the morning of the 6th of May, Major Brown, the commanding officer, was



MAJOR RINGGOLD.

wounded by the bursting of a shell; the wound terminating fatally on the 9th. The bombardment of the fort was kept up till the evening of the 8th, when the enemy raised the siege and beat a retreat.

General Taylor having received information of the bombardment of Fort Brown, from Captains Walker and May, left Point Isabel with his army to march to its relief.

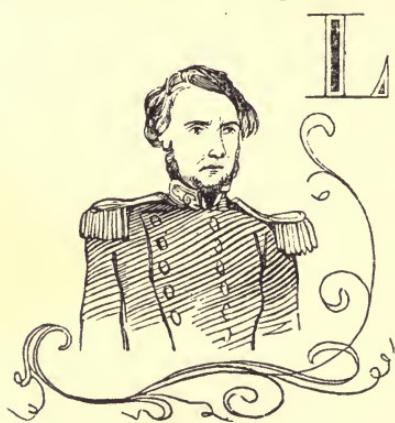
But he did not reach there undisturbed; he met the enemy and defeated them in two desperate engagements on the 8th and 9th. The accounts of these two engagements we have taken from General Taylor's despatches to the seat of government, dated 16th and 17th of May, 1846.

The main body of the "Army of Occupation" (says General Taylor) marched under my immediate orders from Point Isabel on the evening of the 7th of May, and bivouacked seven miles from that place.

"Our march was resumed the following morning. About noon, when our advance of cavalry had reached the water-hole of 'Palo Alto,' the Mexican troops were reported in our front, and were soon discovered occupying the road in force. I ordered a halt upon reaching the water, with

a view to rest and refresh the men and form deliberately our line of battle. The Mexican line was now plainly visible across the prairie, and about three-quarters of a mile distant. Their left, which was composed of a heavy force of cavalry, occupied the road resting upon a thicket of chaparral, while masses of infantry were discovered in succession on the right, greatly outnumbering our own force.

"Our line of battle was now formed in the following order, commanded on the right: 5th infantry, commanded by Lieutenant-colonel McIntosh; Major Ringgold's artillery; 3d infantry, commanded by Captain L. N. Morris; two eighteen pounders, commanded by Lieutenant Churchill, 3d artillery; 4th infantry, commanded by G. W. Allen; the 3d and 4th regiments composed the 3d brigade, under command of Lieutenant-colonel Garland; and all the above corps, together with two squadrons of dragoons, under Captains Ker and May, composed the right wing, under the orders of Colonel Twiggs. The left was formed by the battalion of artillery, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Childs, Captain Duncan's light artillery, and the 8th infantry under Captain Montgomery—all forming the 1st brigade, under command of Lieutenant Colonel Belknap. The train was packed near the water, under directions of Captain Crosman and Myers, and protected by Captain Ker's squadron. At 2 o'clock, we took up our march by heads of columns in the direction of the enemy—the eighteen-pounder battery following the road.



LIEUTENANT BLAKE, of the topographical engineers, while the columns were advancing, volunteered a reconnaissance of the enemy's line, which was handsomely performed, and resulted in the discovery of at least two batteries of artillery in the intervals of their cavalry and infantry. These batteries were soon opened upon us; when I ordered the columns halted and deployed into line, and the fire to be returned by all our artillery. The 8th infantry, on our extreme left, was thrown back to

secure that flank. The first fires did little execution, while our eighteen pounders and Major Ringgold's artillery soon dispersed the cavalry, which formed his left. Captain Duncan's battery, thrown forward in the advance of the line, was doing good execution at this time. Captain May's squadron was now detached to support that battery, and the left of our position. The Mexican cavalry and two pieces of artillery were now reported to be moving through the chaparral to our right, to threaten our flank, or make a demonstration against the train. The 5th infantry was immediately de-



BATTLE OF PALO ALTO.

tached to check this movement, and, supported by Lieutenant Ridgley, with a section of Major Ringgold's battery and Captain Walker's company of volunteers, effectually repulsed the enemy—the 5th infantry repelling a charge of lancers, and the artillery doing great execution in their ranks. The 3d infantry was now detached to the right as a still further security to that flank, threatened by the enemy. Major Ringgold, with the remaining section, kept up his fire from an advanced position and was supported by the 4th infantry.

"The grass of the prairie had been accidentally fired by our artillery, and the volumes of smoke now partially concealed the armies from each other. As the enemy's left had been driven back, and left the road free, as the cannonade had been suspended, I ordered forward the eighteen pounders on the road nearly to the position first occupied by the Mexican cavalry, and caused the 1st brigade to take up a new position still on the left of the eighteen-pounder battery. The 5th was advanced from its former position, and occupied a point on the extreme right of the new line. The enemy made a change of position corresponding to our own, and after a suspension of nearly an hour the action was resumed.

"The fire of artillery was now most destructive—openings were constantly made through the enemy's ranks by our fire, and the constancy with which the Mexican infantry sustained this severe cannonade was a theme of universal remark and admiration. Capt. May's squadron was detached to make a demonstration on the left of the enemy's position, and suffered severely from the fire of artillery, to which it was for some time



COLONEL CHILDS.

exposed. The 4th infantry, which had been ordered to support the eighteen-pounder battery, was exposed to a most galling fire of artillery, by which several men were killed and Capt. Page dangerously wounded. The enemy's fire was directed against our eighteen-pounder battery and the guns of Major Ringgold in its vicinity. The Major himself, while coolly directing the fire of his pieces, was struck by a cannon ball and mortally wounded.

"In the mean time the battalion of artillery, Lieutenant Col. Childs, had been brought up to support the artillery on our right. A strong demonstration of cavalry was now made by the enemy against this part of our line, and the column continued to advance under a severe fire from the eighteen pounders. The battalion was instantly formed in square, and held ready to receive the charge of cavalry, but when the advancing squadrons were within close range, a deadly fire of cannister from the eighteen pounders soon dispersed them. A brisk fire of small arms was now opened upon the square, by which one officer, Lieut. Luther, 2d artillery, was slightly wounded, but a well-directed fire from the front of



DEATH OF MAJOR RINGGOLD.

the square silenced all further firing from the enemy in this quarter. It was now nearly dark, and the action was closed on the right of our line, the enemy having been completely driven back in his position and foiled in his attempt against our line.

"While the above was going forward on our right and under my own eye, the enemy had made a serious attempt against the left of our line. Capt. Duncan instantly perceived the movement, and by the bold and brilliant manoeuvring of his battery, completely repulsed several successive efforts of the enemy to advance in force upon our left flank. Supported in succession by the 8th infantry and by Captain Ker's squadron of dragoons, he gallantly held the enemy at bay, and finally drove him, with immense loss, from the field. The action here, and along the whole line, continued until dark, when the enemy retired into the chaparral in the rear of his position. Our army bivouacked on the ground it occupied. During the afternoon the train had been moved forward about half a mile, and was packed in rear of the new position.

"Our loss, this day, was nine killed, forty-four wounded and two missing. Among the wounded were Major Ringgold, who has since died, and Captain Page, dangerously wounded; Lieut. Luther slightly so. I annex a tabular statement of the casualties of the day.

"Our own force engaged, is shown by the field report to have been 177 officers and 2111 men—aggregate 2288. The Mexican force, according to the statements of their own officers, taken prisoners in the affair of the 9th, was not less than 6000 regular troops, with 10 pieces of artillery, and



CAPTAIN M' CALL.

probably exceeded that number; the irregular force was not known. Their loss was not less than 200 killed and 400 wounded—probably greater. This number is very moderate, and formed upon the number actually counted upon the field and upon the reports of their own officers.

"The conduct of our officers and men was every thing that could be desired. Exposed for hours to the severest trial—a cannonade of artillery—our troops displayed a coolness and constancy, which gave me, throughout, the assurance of victory."

The tabular statement alluded to in the above letter, represents that 9 non-commissioned officers and privates were killed in the battle, and 44 wounded, including 3 commissioned officers.

"Early in the morning of the 9th, the enemy, who had encamped near the field of battle of the day previous, was discovered moving by his left flank, evidently in retreat, and, perhaps, at the same time to gain a new position, on the road to Matamoros, and there again resist our advance.

"I ordered the supply train to be strongly packed at its position, and left with it four pieces of artillery—the two eighteen-pounders which had done such good service on the previous day, and two twelve-pounders which had not been in the action. The wounded officers and men were at the same



MAY'S CHARGE AT RESACA DE LA PALMA.

time sent back to Point Isabel. I then moved forward with the columns to the edge of the chaparral or forest, which extends to the Rio Grande,—a distance of seven miles. The light companies of the first brigade, under Captain C. F. Smith, 2d artillery, and a select detachment of light troops, the whole under the command of Captain McCall, 4th infantry, were thrown forward into the chaparral, to feel the enemy and ascertain his position. About three o'clock, I received a report from the advance that the enemy was in position on the road, with at least two pieces of artillery. The command was immediately put in motion, and about 4 o'clock I came up with Captain McCall, who reported the enemy in force in our front, occupying a ravine which intersects the road, and is skirted by thickets of dense chaparral. Ridgeley's battery, and the advance, under Captain McCall, were at once thrown forward on the road, and into the chaparral, on either side, while the 5th infantry and one wing of the 4th was thrown into the forest on the left, and the 3d and other wing of the 4th, on the right of the road. These corps were employed as skirmishers to cover the battery, and engage the Mexican infantry. Captain McCall's command became at once engaged with the enemy, while the light artillery, though in a very exposed position, did great execution. The enemy had at least eight pieces of artillery, and maintained an incessant fire on our advance.

"The action now became general, and although the enemy's infantry gave way before the steady fire and resistless progress of our own, yet his artillery was still in position to check our advance—several pieces occupying the pass across the ravine, which he had chosen for his position.

Perceiving that no decisive advantage could be gained until this artillery was silenced, I ordered Captain May to charge the batteries with his squadron of dragoons. This was gallantly and effectually executed ; the enemy was driven from his guns, and General La Vega, who remained alone at one of the batteries, was taken prisoner. The squadron, which suffered much in this charge, not being immediately supported by infantry, could not retain possession of the artillery, but it was completely silenced. In the mean time, the 8th infantry had been ordered up, and had become warmly engaged on the right of the road. This regiment, and a part of the 5th, were now ordered to charge the batteries ; which was handsomely done, and the enemy entirely driven from his artillery and his position on the left of the road.

"The light companies of the first brigade, and the 3d and 4th regiments of infantry had been deployed on the right of the road, where, at various points, they became briskly engaged with the enemy. A small party, under Captain Buchanan and Lieutenants Wood and Hays, 4th infantry, composed chiefly of men of that regiment, drove the enemy from a breast-work which he occupied, and captured a piece of artillery. An attempt to recover this piece was repelled by Captain Barbour's 3d infantry. The enemy was at last completely driven from his position on the right of the road, and retreated precipitately, leaving baggage of every description. The 4th infantry took possession of a camp where the head-quarters of the Mexican general-in-chief were established. All his official correspondence was captured at this point.

"The artillery battalion (excepting the flank companies) had been ordered to guard the baggage train, which was packed some distance in the rear. That battalion was now ordered up to pursue the enemy, and, with the 3d infantry, Captain Ker's dragoons, and Captain Duncan's battery, followed him rapidly to the river, making a number of prisoners. Great numbers of the enemy were drowned in attempting to cross the river near the town. The corps last-mentioned encamped near the river—the remainder of the army on the field of battle.

"The strength of our marching force on this day was 173 officers, and 2049 men—aggregate 2222. The actual number engaged with the enemy did not exceed 1700. Our loss was three officers killed, and twelve wounded; thirty-six men killed, and seventy-one wounded. Among the officers killed, I have to regret the loss of Lieutenant Inge, 2d dragoons, who fell at the head of his platoon, while gallantly charging the enemy's battery ; of Lieutenant Chadbourne, of the 8th infantry, and Lieutenant Cochrane, of the 4th, who likewise met their death in the thickest of the fight. The wounded officers were—Lieutenant Colonel Payne, Inspector General ; Lieutenant Dobbins, 3d infantry, serving with the light infantry advance, slightly ; Lieutenant Colonel McIntosh, 5th infantry, severely



LIEUTENANT-COLONEL PAYNE.

(twice); Lieutenant Fowler, 5th infantry, slightly; Captain Montgomery, 8th infantry, slightly; Lieutenants Gates and Jordan, 8th infantry, severely, (each twice); Lieutenants Selden, Maclay, Burbank and Morris, 8th infantry, slightly.

"I have no accurate data from which to estimate the enemy's force on this day. He was known to have been reinforced after the action of the 8th, both by cavalry and infantry, and no doubt to an extent at least equal to his loss on that day. It is probable that 6000 men were opposed to us, and in a position chosen by themselves, and strongly defended with artillery. The enemy's loss was very great. Nearly 200 of his dead were buried by us on the day succeeding the battle. His loss in killed, wounded, and missing, in the two affairs of the 8th and 9th, is, I think, moderately estimated at 1000 men.

"Our victory has been decisive. A small force has overcome immense odds of the best troops that Mexico can furnish—veteran regiments, perfectly equipped and appointed. Eight pieces of artillery, several colours and standards, a great number of prisoners, (including fourteen officers,) and a large amount of baggage and public property, fell into our hands.



CAPTAIN MAY.

"The causes of our victory are, doubtless, to be found in the superior quality of our officers and men."

It is difficult to speak with moderation on these two brilliant actions. The excitement, which the first promulgation of the news created throughout the Union, may be imagined but not described. It created a feeling of excitement and enthusiasm—an impulse towards military adventure, throughout the length and breadth of the land. Preparations were made in every direction for calling forth volunteers—increasing the regular army—fitting out vessels of war—for the display of a land and sea force, unprecedented on this side of the Atlantic.

In less than two weeks, the United States, throughout their length and breadth, were converted, as it were, into a camp. From the most northern part of Maine to the orange groves of Florida—from the Atlantic to the Pacific—nothing was heard of but the din of military preparations—the proclamations of governors—the mustering of forces—and the shouts of volunteers, produced by a nation's leaping at once into arms. In fact, the transition of this vast confederacy into one magnificent camp, from the first



MATAMOROS.

call to arms, was as rapid and as quick as the masterly evolutions and admirable discipline which gave victory to the American arms, in both the battles on the Rio Grande.

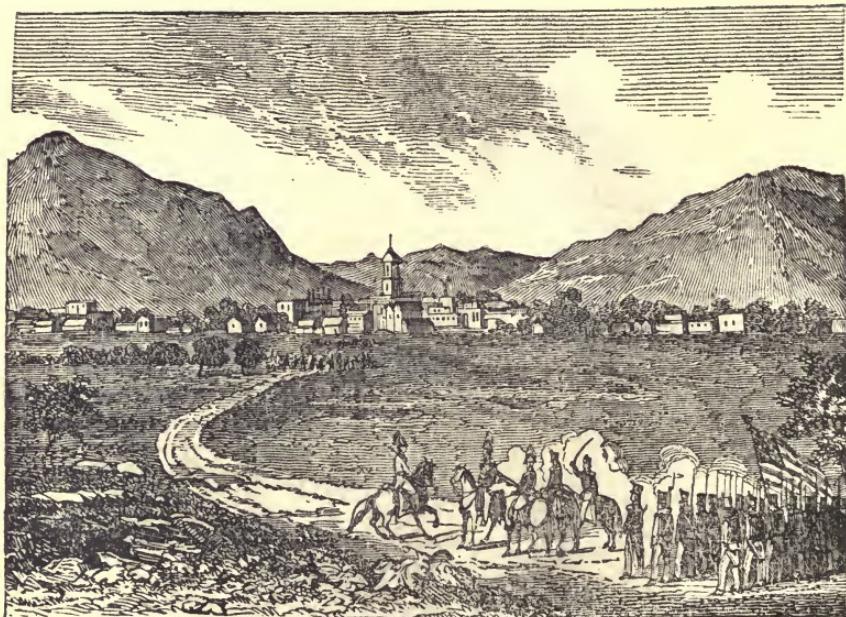
The battles of the 8th and 9th of May were speedily followed by the capture of Matamoros.

After the occupancy of Matamoros by our army, General Taylor despatched all the cavalry (regular and irregular) of the army, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Garland, to pursue the retreating army and harass its rear, and if possible to capture prisoners and baggage. They returned on the 22d, having succeeded in capturing a small rear party, after a trifling skirmish in the night, in which two were killed on the Mexican side, and two slightly wounded on our own. The route of the retreating army was pursued for sixty miles; the scarcity of water and the condition of the horses making it useless to proceed farther.

The town of Barita was occupied by Lieutenant-Colonel Wilson without the least opposition.

Our army, the moment they entered Matamoros, instituted a search for the public stores, which were known to be concealed in the town, and succeeded in recovering, from the places where they had been hid, two field-pieces, several hundred muskets, and two or three hundred shells.

Our army was necessarily detained at Matamoros for some length of time, for the want of suitable transportation to carry on offensive operations. Information of this fact was forwarded to the seat of government by Ge-



AMERICAN ARMY ENTERING MARIN.

neral Taylor in his despatch, dated June 3d. He had not a steamboat at his command suitable for the navigation of the Rio Grande; and without water transportation, he considered it useless to make any extensive movement.

"For any operations in the direction of Monterey," says General Taylor, "it will be necessary to establish a large depot at Camargo, which I shall lose no time in doing as soon as the proper transports arrive, unless I receive counter-instructions from the department.

"I trust the department will see that I could not possibly have anticipated the arrival of such heavy reinforcements from Louisiana as are now here, and on their way hither. Without large means of transportation, this force will embarrass rather than facilitate our operations. I cannot doubt that the department has already given instructions, based upon the change in our position, since my first call for volunteers."

Large reinforcements of volunteers from the various States of the Union were now constantly arriving at Matamoros, and taking up their quarters in that town; but their not bringing with them any facilities for water transport, rendered them only an embarrassment to the army.

Early in July, however, the means of transportation arrived, and Reynosa, Mier, China, Camargo, and Marin were entered without opposition and successively occupied by our troops in their onward march towards the city of Monterey; the latter being a place of the utmost importance, as it guarded the road to the interior. These towns were all occupied by our

troops, without any resistance on the part of the inhabitants. Leaving a small detachment at each of these places, as a garrison, General Taylor proceeded with the main body of the army towards Monterey; and arrived at the "Walnut Springs," three miles distant from Monterey, on the evening of the 19th of September.

The city of Monterey is situated in a beautiful and fertile valley, completely land-locked by immense mountains on the west, north, and south; from the east it is approached by an open plain, while on all the other sides the gorges of the mountains form the only thoroughfare. The city itself is strongly fortified with large stone-works, surrounded by deep ditches, and all the appurtenances of a strong military position. In addition to this, every church has been converted into a fortress, every street barricaded, and every house-top presented a parapet bristling with musketry. So perfect had been the precaution of the enemy, that every road leading towards the city from the east, was raked by a heavy cross-fire of twelve-pounders. The side and rear approaches were commanded by the Bishop's Palace, well fortified by a redoubt which commanded the Palace, and by a second redoubt, still higher up the hill side, which commanded the first; in the rear of all these runs the river San Juan. It was this position, well garrisoned, well victualled, filled with heavy cannon and an immense supply of the munitions of war, that our army approached with less than 7000 men, many of whom were raw volunteers.

Towards the end of August, General Worth was ordered by General Taylor to advance with his division from Camargo to Seralvo, and there await further orders. From this post he sent advices to General Taylor, on the 5th of September, that Monterey had been reinforced by a large force of Mexicans, under the command of General Ampudia.

This important information determined General Taylor to advance immediately and attack Monterey. He accordingly took up his line of march towards Seralvo on the 7th, leaving General Patterson in command of all the forces stationed at the various posts between Camargo and Matamoros. On his arrival at Seralvo, instead of waiting for further reinforcements, he pushed forward with the main body of his army, consisting of but little more than six thousand men, and arrived before Monterey on the morning of the 19th, establishing his camp at the "Walnut Springs," within three miles of the city.

On the 20th, General Worth, with the division under his command, was ordered by General Taylor to move by a circuitous route to the right, to gain the Saltillo road beyond the west of the town, to storm the heights above the Bishop's Palace, which vital point the enemy appeared to have well fortified.

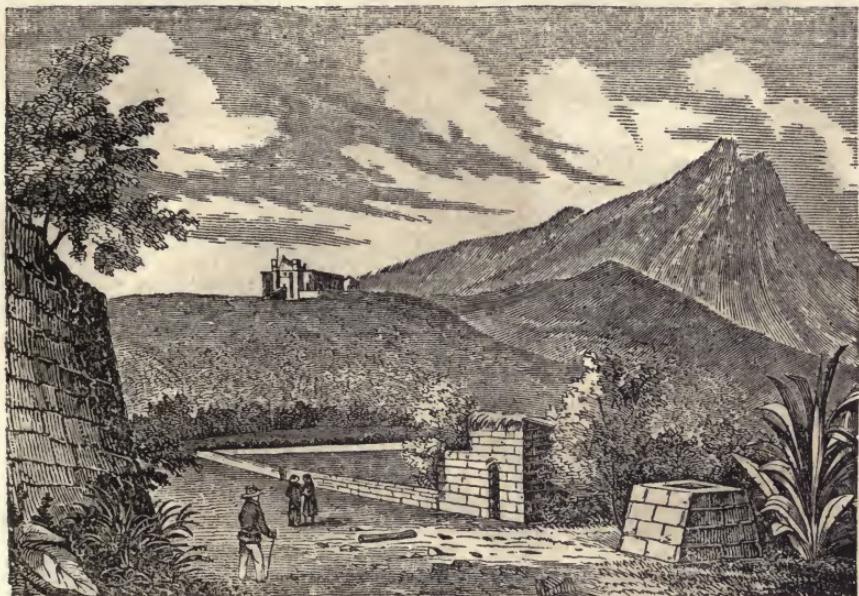
Various circumstances prevented General Worth from reaching the intended position, until the morning of the 21st, and after an encounter with a large force of Mexican cavalry and infantry, supported by artillery



GENERAL WORTH.

from the heights, he repulsed them with loss, and finally encamped, covering the passage of the Saltillo road. It was here discovered, that besides the fort at the Bishop's Palace, and the fortified heights above it, two forts, on commanding eminences on the opposite side of the palace, had also been fortified and occupied by the Mexicans.

To favour the enterprise of Worth in the rear, the first division of regular troops, under General Twiggs, and the volunteer division under General Butler, were ordered to make a diversion against the centre and left of the town. A heavy fire was now opened from all the Mexican batteries upon the advancing Americans, and for a time was most destructive. Ere this day closed, Worth had successfully stormed and carried the two principal redoubts in the rear of the town, and immediately turned the enemy's guns upon the Palace. A small force of the Americans, detached to favour the movements of Worth, entered the town under a heavy fire of artillery from the citadel and works to the left of the town, and of musketry from the houses and small works in front. After entering the town, a movement was made towards the right, with a view of gaining the rear of one of the principal forts and carrying it. This was effected, but not without a very



BISHOP'S PALACE, MONTEREY.

heavy loss on the part of the Americans, embracing some of their most gallant and accomplished officers. The division under General Worth sustained comparatively little loss.

The 22d passed without any active operations in the lower part of the city. The citadel and other works continued to fire at parties exposed to their range, and at the work which was occupied by the Americans. One of the principal batteries of the Americans, under the command of Captain Bragg, was placed under cover in front of the town, to repel any demonstration of the enemy's cavalry in that quarter. At the dawn of day, the two remaining heights above the Bishop's Palace were stormed and carried by General Worth's division, and early in the afternoon the Palace itself was taken, and its guns turned upon the fugitive garrison and the town, which latter, being so distant, was little injured.

During the night of the 22d, the Mexicans evacuated nearly all their defences in the lower part of the city, and threw the main body of their force into the cathedral and principal defences of the centre of the town. The abandoned works were immediately occupied by the Americans, who opened a heavy fire, both of artillery and musketry, upon the defences of the Mexicans. This day's fight is said to have been worth seeing; it was sublimely magnificent. The Americans advanced from house to house, and from street to street, until they reached a street but one square in rear of the principal plaza, in and near which the Mexicans were mainly concentrated. This advance was conducted vigorously, and with due caution, and although destructive to the Mexicans, was attended with but small loss



CITADEL AND TOWN OF MONTEREY.

on the part of the Americans. Deeming it imprudent to advance further, General Taylor withdrew his troops to the evacuated forts, and concerted with General Worth for a combined attack upon the points still held by the enemy.

Simultaneously with the evacuation of the works in the lower part of the town, the works at the upper extremity were for the most part abandoned, which enabled General Worth to push his division still further into the town. Before night the Americans had entered the city at all points, driving the enemy to the cover of the principal works in the centre of the town. All night long the mortar (which had been sent to General Worth's division in the morning) did good execution, within effective range of the enemy's position.

Early on the morning of the 24th, General Taylor received a communication from General Ampudia, commander-in-chief of the Mexican force, proposing to evacuate the town upon certain conditions, to be agreed upon by the commanding officers of both armies. The terms of the capitulation of the city were in substance these: That the Mexican forces evacuate the city, which was to be delivered up to the Americans. The Mexicans should march out with their muskets and twenty rounds of cartridges, and six pieces of cannon. That the Mexicans (during an armistice of six weeks) should not appear this side of a line running through Leinares,



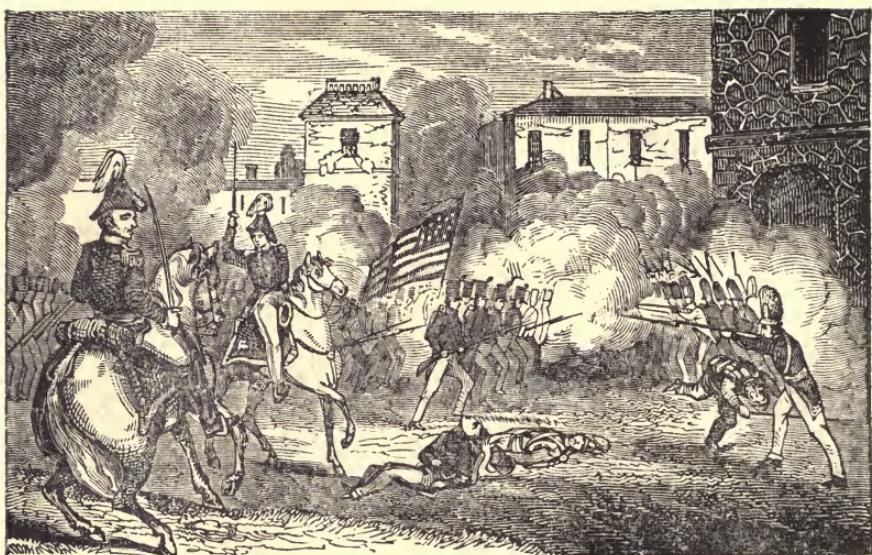
STREET FIGHT AT MONTEREY.

and terminating at Rinconada ; and the Americans should not advance beyond it.

Upon occupying the city, the Americans discovered it to be of great strength in itself, and all its approaches carefully and strongly fortified. The town and works were armed with forty-two pieces of cannon, well supplied with ammunition, and manned with a force of at least seven thousand troops of the line, and from two thousand to three thousand irregulars. The whole effective force of the Americans was four hundred and twenty-five officers, and six thousand two hundred and twenty men—aggregate six thousand six hundred and forty-five. The artillery of the Americans consisted of one ten-inch mortar, two twenty-four pounder howitzers, and four light field-batteries of four guns each—the mortar being the only piece suitable to the operations of a siege.

The loss of the Americans was twelve officers and one hundred and eight men killed ; thirty-one officers and three hundred and thirty-seven men wounded. The loss of the Mexicans not known, but it considerably exceeded that of the Americans.

Monterey now became the head-quarters of the main body of the regular army. This city is one of the oldest in Mexico, having been built by the Spaniards nearly three centuries ago. It is nearly two miles long and one mile wide, with streets running parallel, crossed by others at right angles. The city contains three plazas or squares, upon the main one of which



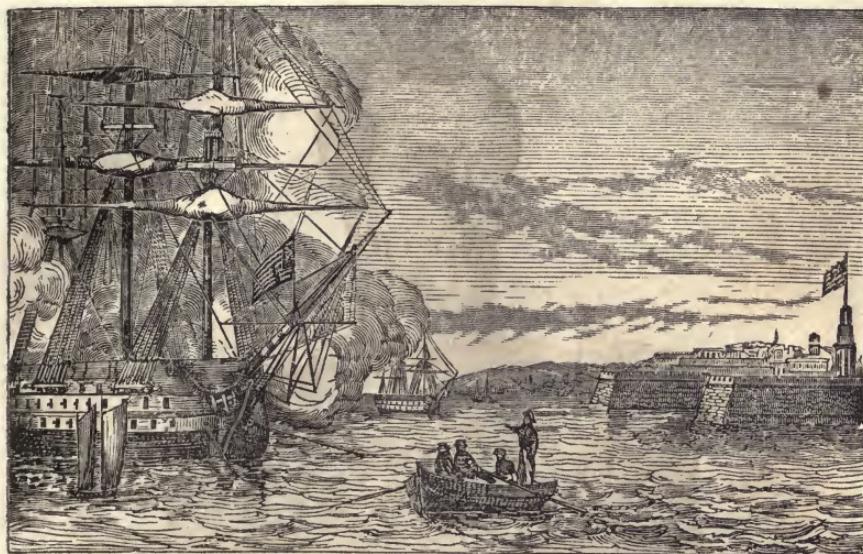
STORMING OF MONTEREY.

stands the principal cathedral. This building, during the attack, was used by the Mexicans as a depository for military stores.

The houses are of one story, with walls of strong mason-work, thirty inches in thickness, rising three or four feet above the roof. These walls, rising in the manner they do, afforded the Mexicans a powerful means of defence. The reduction, and subsequent occupation of this city, was necessary, as it commanded one of the principal passes to the interior, and its capital. After establishing the head-quarters of his army at this place, General Taylor detached Brigadier-general Worth, with twelve hundred men and eight pieces of artillery, to Saltillo. Brigadier-general Wool, and the column under his command, two thousand four hundred strong, with six pieces of artillery, were ordered to occupy the town of Parras, lying seventy miles north-east of Saltillo. Saltillo, to which Worth was ordered, is about seventy miles from Monterey, and at an elevation of two thousand feet above the latter place. These two places were occupied by the Americans without any opposition, the enemy having fallen back as far as San Luis Potosi.

In the mean time, the government of Mexico had undergone a serious change. Paredes had been deposed, and Santa Anna, who had been exiled, was recalled, and placed at the head of affairs. Immediately after his arrival at the capital, he set about raising a formidable army to resist the further advance of General Taylor. Before the close of the year, he had succeeded in raising twenty thousand men, and concentrating them at San Luis Potosi, which place he strongly fortified and filled with military stores.

General Taylor waited for the advance of this formidable force for some



VERA CRUZ.

time, and at last determined to meet and attack them upon their own ground. He accordingly set out with his force for Victoria, where he arrived on the 30th of December.

General Taylor was now superseded in the supreme command of the American army in Mexico, by General Scott, the commander-in-chief, who drew from General Taylor the main body of the regular and volunteer force then under his command, to act in conjunction with the fleet in the Gulf, in the reduction of Vera Cruz and the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa. General Taylor was ordered to fall back to Monterey, to await the arrival of the fresh recruits—volunteers which had been ordered by Congress to take the field before he advanced any farther into the interior. On reaching Monterey, his regular force was but six hundred men, including the company of dragoons under the command of Captain May. In February, 1847, he had received reinforcements raising his army to nearly six thousand men; and anticipating an attempt, on the part of Santa Anna, on the line of posts between himself and Matamoros, he determined to advance and fight a pitched battle with him. Accordingly, the army under his command took up the line of march, and, on the 20th of February, encamped at Agua Nueva, (new water,) eighteen miles south of Saltillo; but learning from one of his scouts that Santa Anna was within twenty miles of his position, rapidly advancing with twenty thousand men, he broke up his camp at Agua Nueva, and fell back to a well-chosen position in front of Buena Vista, seven miles south of Saltillo.

The position chosen by General Taylor for his battle-ground was an admirable one. The mountains rise on either side of an irregular and



GENERAL WOOL.

broken valley, nearly three miles in width, which is dotted here and there with hills and ridges.

On the right of the American line ran a deep ravine, which protected that flank more effectually than half a dozen regiments could have done. The left was protected by the mountains, and a succession of rugged ridges and precipitous ravines. The peculiarities of this position supplied, in a great measure, the disadvantage of so vast an inferiority of numbers.

On the morning of the 22d of February, the Mexicans were seen approaching in immense numbers, over the distant hills. Their officers and engineers were distinctly seen flying over the field, dragging their cannon, (thirty-two in number,) about to put them into position.

At eleven o'clock, General Taylor was waited upon by Surgeon Leigenburgh of the Mexican army, who carried a white flag, and a communication from his commander. In this note Santa Anna stated his force at twenty thousand men, from which, as he supposed, it was impossible for his antagonist to escape; but on account of the American general deserving particular attention and esteem, he afforded him an opportunity to surrender at discretion, under the assurance that he would be treated with

proper respect. An hour's time was allowed for reflection. The American general immediately wrote the following answer:

"In reply to your note of this date, summoning me to surrender my forces at discretion, I beg leave to say that I decline acceding to your request."

Immediately after the return of the messenger to General Santa Anna's camp, the Mexicans opened the fire of their artillery upon the American lines, which, though kept up briskly, did so little execution in the ranks of the Americans, that it was considered unnecessary to return it.

Just before dark, a number of Santa Anna's infantry, having succeeded in getting a position high up the mountains, to the left of the Americans, opened a most tremendous fire upon their flank. The fire was returned by a portion of the Kentucky mounted regiment, under Colonel Marshall, who were dismounted and detached for that purpose. The skirmishing continued until dark, with no result to the Americans but the wounding of three men slightly.

During the night, a Mexican prisoner was taken, who reported that the Mexican force consisted of fifteen thousand infantry, and six thousand cavalry, thus confirming the statement of his superior.

At sunrise, on the morning of the 23d, the battle began in earnest, General Wool directing the details of the action. The Mexicans were drawn out in immense numbers. The dark lines of their infantry extended as far as the eye could reach, and their cavalry seemed to cover the whole view with their interminable lines. From the movements soon perceptible along the left of the American line, it became evident that the Mexicans were attempting to turn that flank, and for this purpose had concentrated a large body of cavalry and infantry. To prevent this movement of the enemy, General Taylor ordered Sherman's and Bragg's batteries to the left, the second Illinois regiment, under Colonel Bissel, occupying a position between them; while the second Kentucky regiment was transferred from the right of the line, so as to hold a position near the centre. The extreme left was supported by the second Indiana regiment, under Colonel Bowles: this regiment was placed so as to oppose, by a direct fire, the flank movements of the enemy. As soon as these dispositions had been effected, both armies opened the fires of their artillery, and at the same moment the Mexican infantry commenced a rapid fire of musketry. The fire of the enemy was received with great firmness by the Americans, who returned an ample equivalent: each regiment vying with the other in the honourable ambition of doing the best service to their country.

While this fierce conflict was going on, the enemy's cavalry had been slowly pursuing its way along the mountain defiles, and, though the American artillery had wrought great havoc among its numbers, the leading squadrons were almost in position to attack the Americans in the rear. To



BATTLE OF BUENA VISTA.

prevent this movement of the enemy, the American artillery was advanced, its front extended, and its whole fire opened upon the ranks of the enemy, completely dispersing them.

The battery on the right had now opened its fire, and had driven back, with an immense loss, a large body of Mexican lancers, advancing in that direction. The battle now raged with fury—the discharges of the infantry, and the volleys of artillery followed each other in rapid succession, and deadly was the effect. Twice more did the Mexican cavalry rally their scattered numbers, and twice were they driven back, in utter confusion, after the last charge taking refuge among the mountains, on the opposite side of the valley.

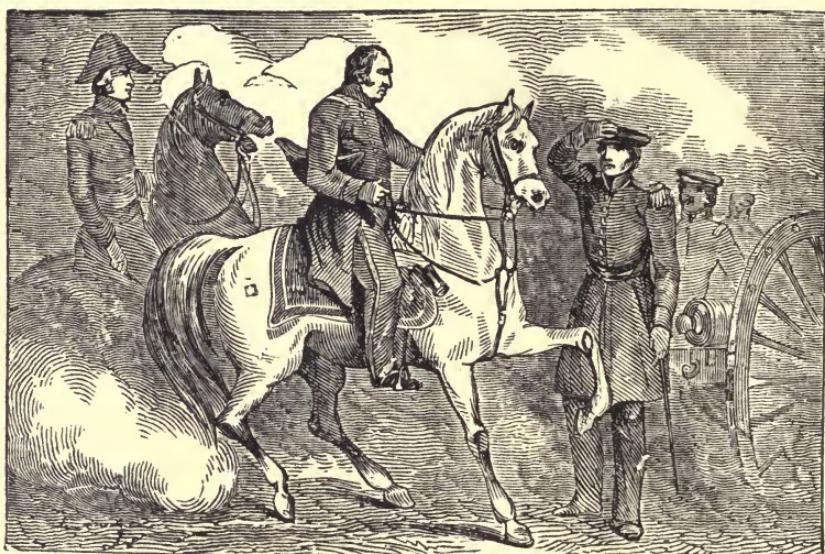
About the same time the 2d Illinois regiment, under Colonel Bissell, having become completely outflanked, was compelled to fall back. Col. Marshall's light troops, on the extreme left, came down from their mountainous position, and joined the American main army. Masses of cavalry and infantry were now pouring through the defiles on the American left, in order to gain the rear north of the large plateau. At this moment General Taylor arrived upon the field from Saltillo. As the Mexican infantry turned the American flank, they came in contact with Colonel Davis's Mississippi riflemen, posted on a plateau north of the principal one. The 2d Kentucky regiment and a section of artillery, under Captain Bragg, had previously been ordered to this position from the right, and arrived at a most important crisis. As the masses of the enemy emerged from the defiles, to the table-land above, they opened upon the riflemen,



DAVIS'S RIFLEMEN REPULSING THE MEXICAN CAVALRY.

and the battle soon became deeply interesting. The lancers meanwhile were drawing up for a charge. The artillery on each side was in an incessant blaze, and one sheet of sparkling fire flashed from the small arms of both lines. Then the cavalry came dashing down, in dense column, their dress and arms glittering in the sun, seemingly in strange contrast with their work of death. All around was clamour and hurry, drowning the shouts of command, and groans of the dying. Davis gave the order to fire, a report from hundreds of the rifles rang along his line, and mangled heaps of the enemy sunk to the ground. Struck with dismay, the lacerated host heaved back, while in mad confusion, horse trod down horse, crushing wounded and dying beneath their hoofs in the reckless rushings of retreat. The day was once more saved.

At the same time the Kentucky regiment, supported by Bragg's artillery, had driven back the enemy's infantry, and recovered a portion of the lost ground. The latter officer then moved his pieces to the main plateau, where, in company with Captain Sherman, he did much execution, particularly upon the masses that were in the rear. General Taylor placed all the regular cavalry and Captain Pike's squadron of horse under the orders of Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel May, with directions to hold in check the enemy's column still advancing to the rear along the base of the mountain. May posted himself north of the ravine, through which the enemy were moving towards Buena Vista, in order to charge them as they approached that. The enemy, however, still continued to advance, until almost the whole American artillery were playing upon them. At length unable to stand the fearful slaughter, their ranks fell into confusion, some



GENERAL TAYLOR AND CAPTAIN BRAGG AT BUENA VISTA.

of the corps attempting to effect a retreat upon their main line of battle. To prevent this, the general ordered the 1st dragoons, under Lieutenant Rucker, to ascend the deep ravine, which these corps were endeavouring to cross, and disperse them. The squadron, however, were unable to accomplish their object, in consequence of a heavy fire from a battery covering the enemy's retreat.

The fortunes of the day were now with the Americans. Santa Anna saw the probable result, and by craft and cunning sought to avert it. He sent a white flag to General Taylor, desiring the bearer to ask him "what he wanted." The answer returned by General Taylor was, "that he wanted peace." The flag, however, only proved a ruse on the part of Santa Anna, in order that he might gain time to collect his scattered forces. This he effected, notwithstanding the efforts of the Americans to prevent it.

The Mexicans now came on in large numbers, and the carnage for some time was dreadful on both sides. The Americans were but a handful to oppose the frightful masses that were ever and anon hurled upon them. A superior force of the enemy engaged the second Illinois and second Kentucky regiments, and completely overwhelmed them by numbers. Captain O'Brien, with two pieces of artillery, sustained this heavy charge to the last, but was finally compelled to leave his guns on the field, his infantry support being entirely routed. The moment was now most critical; the day seemed lost beyond redemption to the Americans. Victory, which a very short time before appeared within their grasp, was as suddenly torn from them.

At this critical moment, Captain Bragg, who had just arrived from the

left, was, by General Taylor, ordered at once into battery. Without any infantry to support him, and at the momentary risk of losing his guns, this gallant officer opened a heavy fire upon the Mexican line, which was but a few yards from the muzzles of his pieces. The first volley caused the enemy to hesitate, and the second and third drove them back in utter confusion. The second Kentucky regiment, which had advanced beyond supporting distance, was attacked and driven back by the Mexican cavalry. Taking a ravine which led in the direction of the battery under Captain Washington, the cavalry soon became exposed to his fire, which checked and drove them back with severe loss. The remainder of the American artillery now opened a heavy fire upon the right flank of the enemy, and thus contributed to his final repulse.

No further attempt was made by the enemy upon the American position; and after the last deadly fire of the American artillery, both armies seemed willing to pause upon the result. The Americans slept upon the field of battle, prepared, if necessary, to resume operations on the morrow. But before sunrise on the 24th, the enemy had disappeared, having retreated to Agua Nueva, leaving only his dead and dying on the battle-field. The great disparity of numbers, and the exhaustion of the Americans, rendered it inexpedient and hazardous to attempt a pursuit.

The American force engaged in the battle of Buena Vista, was three hundred and thirty-four officers, and four thousand four hundred and twenty-five men—aggregate four thousand seven hundred and fifty-nine. The remainder of the American army was stationed in and near Saltillo, for its defence. The Mexican force was stated by General Santa Anna, in his summons, to be twenty thousand men.

The loss of the Americans was two hundred and sixty-seven killed, four hundred and fifty-six wounded, and twenty-three missing. That of the Mexicans in killed and wounded was nearly two thousand; deserters from their ranks nearly three thousand. Nearly five hundred of their dead were left upon the field of battle. Many officers of distinguished merit among the Americans were killed. Colonels Yell, Hardin, and Clay, were particularly regretted. Colonel Clay was the son of the celebrated Henry Clay.

After the battle of Buena Vista, General Taylor determined to open the communication between Monterey and Camargo, which had been cut off by General Urrea, at the head of about five thousand cavalry. He immediately started in pursuit of this general, taking with him Captain May's dragoons, and two companies of artillery. He pursued Urrea as far as Caidereta, where he ascertained that he had escaped beyond the mountains.

General Taylor then fell back on Monterey. General Wool, with the main body of the American army, had encamped at Buena Vista. Both

generals awaiting orders from General Scott before proceeding farther into the interior.

The following remarks upon General Taylor are made by Sergeant Harris of the army, who is of course personally acquainted with him :—

"The character of General Taylor is pretty much what it is represented. He is mild and affable, yet firm and unflinching. If a soldier under his command thinks he is aggrieved, it is to the general he looks for redress, and never fails in getting it, in case General Taylor, on inquiry, ascertains it to be well founded. The 'old man,' as he is familiarly termed by officers and men, is approachable at all hours. He will sit and talk with the commonest soldier in the most affable manner, and my informant tells me that he has often wondered at seeing him enter minutely into the private affairs of the soldiers under his command, give them his advice when asked, as it frequently is, and when that is over, read to them from the newspapers the anecdotes of the army, which have made their way into print in the northern cities, at which he would laugh as heartily as any of them. He is beloved by all in his command, officers and men. All take pleasure in obeying his commands ; and when an order is given by him, there is emulation among all who hear it, to obey it. His treatment of the Mexicans is marked with the same urbanity. They, according to my informant, at least such of them as have been in the habit of serving the camp with milk and other little nick-nacks, love him as much as his own soldiers do.

"On a certain occasion one of these poor creatures complained to *El Capitan*, that a volunteer had entered his rancho, and appropriated to his own use some of his edibles, without paying for them. Now this was a breach of orders which General Taylor could not overlook, so he had the marauder identified by the Mexican, and brought before him. The general examined and cross-examined him, in relation to the offence, for upwards of two hours, at the end of which time he arrived at the conclusion that the volunteer was not quite so much to blame as the accuser represented, but thought him deserving of some punishment, and what was the punishment do you suppose he inflicted upon him ? Why, he directed a barrel to be placed in front of his tent, directed the volunteer to mount it, and kept him standing there for two hours. At the end of which he gave him a few words about not doing the like again, &c., and sent him back to his quarters. Occasionally it occurs that a man will want to write a letter to his friends, and has no materials to do so. Without hesitation he applies to the 'old man,' and gets all he wants, pen, ink, and paper, and wafer, which comes from his private stock, which is always at the service of the soldiers."

We have all heard the *soubriquet* of Rough and Ready had its origin in the Florida war, in which General Taylor treated the red-skins in the roughest way and in the readiest manner ; but I have not seen it stated when it was first used in this war. According to Sergeant Harris, it was

in this way : "After the memorable battles of Resaca de la Palma and Palo Alto, the old general directed the men to be brought up before him in review, which was of course done. While reviewing them, to see, no doubt, how they looked after their scrimmage with the yellow bellies, an old soldier, who served under him in the Florida war, proposed at the top of his voice, 'Three cheers for old Rough and Ready ;' which were given with all the honours. As soon as they had subsided, the old general, every feature in his open countenance speaking volumes, gracefully took off his chapeau, and returned thanks, and added, 'Gentlemen, I would be happy to treat you all, but I have got nothing except some Rio Grande water with which to do it.'

"On one occasion, a volunteer getting tired of discipline, thought he would relieve himself of it for a time at least, and with that view absented himself for a week without leave, and made a trip to the country. As soon as his absence was known to the camp, he was proclaimed a deserter, and men sent in pursuit of him. He returned, however, before he was arrested, and immediately made his way to the old general, and told him in mitigation of punishment, that he was always accustomed to open backwood life, and it went hard with him to be confined so much. 'Well,' said the general, 'don't do so again, my boy, without leave,' and directed him to go to his quarters. That man, says my informant, thinks General Taylor the best man living, and he would willingly lose life itself at his bidding.

"General Taylor's modesty is equalled by his magnanimity. It was not known in camp until three weeks after it was known to the general himself, that he had received a brevet, and all the army heard of the sword presentation to him, was through the papers."

Another writer says :

"As plain Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor, the writer of this has often seen 'Old Zach' putting his men through the battalion drill on the northern banks of the Wisconsin in the depths of February. This would seem only characteristic of the man who has since proved himself equally 'Rough and Ready' under the scorching sun of the tropics. But, looking back through long years to many a pleasant hour spent in the well-selected library of the post which Colonel Taylor then commanded, we recur now with singular interest to the agreeable conversations held in the room which was the Colonel's favourite resort amid the intervals of duty. Nor will the reader think these personal reminiscences impertinent, when we add that our object in recurring to them here is simply to mention that, remembering alike the wintry drill and the snug book-room, Taylor's hardihood—the idea of which now so readily attaches to his sobriquet of Rough and Ready—would certainly not then have struck a stranger as more characteristic than his liberal-minded intelligence. Remarkable sincerity of manner, a dash of humour amid diffident reserve, blended with a cordiality

that for want of a better phrase we should call mesmeric, characterized the mien of the distinguished man, upon whom the eyes of all his countrymen are now fixed with such curious interest. He was one of those few men who instantly impress a stranger with the idea of frankness and reality of character, while still suggesting to the imagination that there was much to study in him. Above all was it apparent that this singular modesty was genuine—was of the soul; that he was a man whose strong individuality his nearest intimates must hesitate to write about and publish to the world in terms of praise. And we know the fact that in one instance a friend whom the General had obliged, when replying to some newspaper disparagement of Taylor's military standing and services at the commencement of the Florida war, was deterred by his knowledge of this trait from communicating his article to the subject of it, lest the terms of eulogy he had employed might be offensive to Taylor. This dislike of puffery, nay this almost wayward turning one's back upon fame, is, however, perfectly consistent with the most jealous sense of what is due to one's personal character; and that quality General Taylor's published correspondence with the Department of War proves he possesses in the most lively degree. He there shows that he leaves the laurels of the hero to take care of themselves, but the rights and the character of Zachary Taylor must not be tampered with. And this is the quality which will ever prevent him from becoming the tool of party. He is a man that cannot be used by others save in the line of his duty. A man who cannot be approached to be thus used; for there is sometimes a shrewd fire in the glance of his friendly eye, an epigrammatic heartiness of response bolting forth amid his taciturnity, that would utterly bewilder and confound the ordinary man of the world, who approached him with double-dealing phrase, or selfish insincerity of purpose.

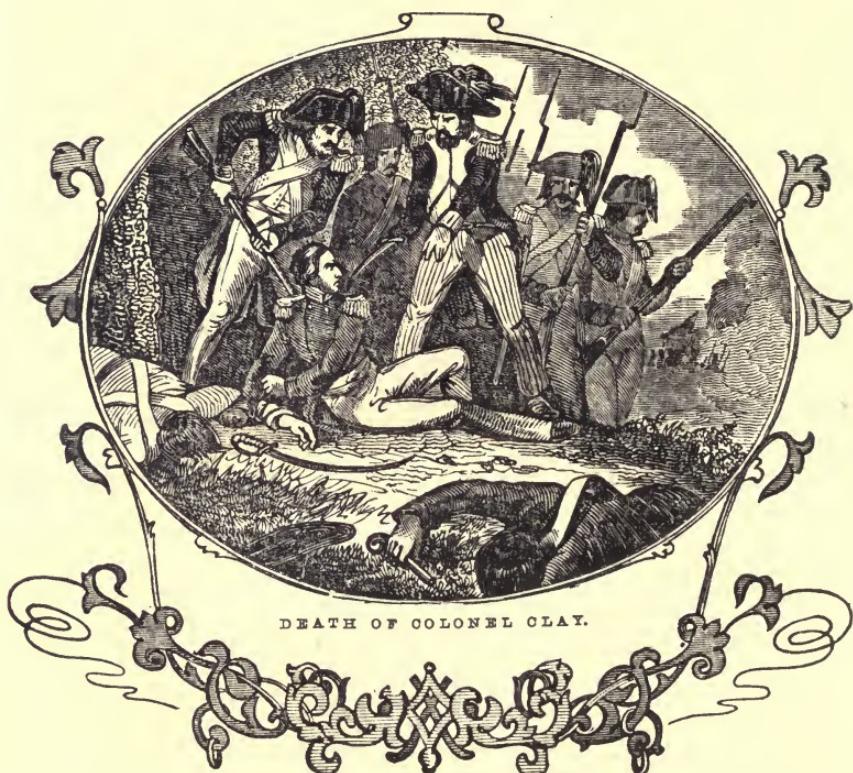
“With regard to his personal appearance, of all the portraits of General Taylor that we have seen, and there is one in each of the volumes before us, that published in Graham's Magazine strikes us as decidedly the best. In some respects it is flattered, and in others it hardly comes up to the strongly marked character expressed in the face of the original; as a whole, however, it is far more faithful than the others. Its flattery, we imagine, lies in making Taylor look younger than he now appears. For his looks in the picture are those which we recall when seeing him just after the close of his campaign, now many years gone by. The stamped medals published lately by J. P. Ridner we should think would better represent his present appearance.

“While indulging in these gossiping references, which we know will interest some of our readers, we may here relate an anecdote of General Taylor, which we once heard, amid the early scenes of the Black Hawk war on Rock river, and which, though never verified to our knowledge,

still seems most characteristic of the Rough and Ready of later years. Some time after Stillman's defeat by Black Hawk's band, Taylor, marching with a large body of volunteers and a handful of regulars in pursuit of the hostile Indian force, found himself approaching Rock river, then asserted by many to be the true north-western boundary of the state of Illinois. The volunteers, as Taylor was informed, would refuse to cross the stream. They were militia, they said, called out for the defence of the state, and it was unconstitutional to order them to march beyond its frontier into the Indian country. Taylor thereupon halted his command, and encamped within the acknowledged boundaries of Illinois. He would not, as the relator of the story said, budge an inch further without orders. He had already driven Black Hawk out of the state, but the question of crossing Rock river seemed hugely to trouble his ideas of integrity to the constitution on one side, and military expediency on the other. During the night, however, orders came, either from General Scott or General Atkinson, for him to follow up Black Hawk to the last. The quietness of the Regular colonel meanwhile had rather encouraged the mutinous militia to bring their proceedings to a head. A sort of town-meeting was called upon the prairie, and Taylor invited to attend. After listening for some time very quietly to the proceedings, it became Rough and Ready's turn to address the chair. 'He had heard,' he said, 'with much pleasure the views which several speakers had of the independence and dignity of each private American citizen. He felt that all gentlemen there present were his equals—in reality he was persuaded that many of them would in a few years be his superiors, and perhaps, in the capacity of members of Congress, arbiters of the fortune and reputation of humble servants of the Republic like himself. He expected then to obey them as interpreters of the will of the people; and the best proofs he could give that he would obey them, was now to observe the orders of those whom the people had already put in the places of authority, to which many gentlemen around him justly aspired. In plain English, gentlemen and fellow-citizens, the word has been passed on to me from Washington to follow Black Hawk, and take you with me as soldiers. I mean to do both. There are the flat-boats drawn up on the shore, and here are Uncle Sam's men drawn up behind you on the prairie.'

"'Stra-anger,' added the man who told the story, 'the way them militiamen sloped into those flat-boats was a caution. Not another word was said. Had Zach Taylor been with Van Rensselaer at Niagara river, in the last war, I rayther think he'd a taught him how to get militia-men over a ferry.'"

After the battle of Buena Vista, General Taylor addressed the following letter to the Hon. Henry Clay, concerning the death of his son, who fell in that battle. It shows that although the general has lived from a youth



DEATH OF COLONEL CLAY.

amid the horrors of camp life, he has yet a heart big with the noblest sentiments of humanity.

"**M**Y DEAR SIR:—You will no doubt have received, before this can reach you, the deeply distressing intelligence of the death of your son in the battle of Buena Vista. It is with no wish of intruding upon the sanctuary of parental sorrow, and with no hope of administering any consolation to your wounded heart, that I have taken the liberty of addressing you these few lines; but I have felt it a duty which I owe to the memory of the distinguished dead, to pay a willing tribute to his many excellent qualities, and while my feelings are still fresh, to express the desolation which his untimely loss and that of other kindred spirits has occasioned.

"I had but a casual acquaintance with your son, until he became for a time a member of my military family, and I can truly say that no one ever won more rapidly upon my regard, or established a more lasting claim to my respect and esteem. Manly and honourable in every impulse, with no feeling but for the honour of the service and of the country, he gave every assurance that in the hour of need I could lean with confidence upon his support. Nor was I disappointed. Under the guidance of himself and the lamented McKee, gallantly did the sons of Kentucky, in the thickest of the strife, uphold the honour of the state and country.



LIEUTENANT-COLONEL CLAY.

"A grateful people will do justice to the memory of those who fell on that eventful day. But I may be permitted to express the bereavement which I feel in the loss of valued friends. To your son I felt bound by the strongest ties of private regard; and when I miss his familiar face, and those of McKee and Hardin, I can say with truth, that I feel no exultation in our success."

We close our sketches of General Taylor by the following just tribute to his abilities and integrity of character.

At a barbacue given to the Kentucky volunteers at Jeffersontown, Colonel Humphrey Marshall delivered a speech, in the course of which he spoke in the following terms of the character of Old Rough and Ready. It may be remarked that those qualities which are so conspicuous in the character of General Taylor, such as his simplicity, sincerity, manliness and honesty, are the very attributes that endear him to the masses. Nothing recommends a man more speedily to the affections of the people than the presence of those homely and old-fashioned virtues which prove the sterling metal of his nature.

"My service in Mexico frequently brought me near to General Taylor,

and I was industrious in my examination of the actual character of the man whenever opportunity was presented. I have no motive to deceive you, and you must take the impressions I received for what they are worth. If I desired to express in the fewest words what manner of man General Taylor is, I should say that, in his manners and his appearance, *he is one of the common people of this country*. He might be transferred from his tent at Monterey to this assembly, and he would not be remarked among this crowd of respectable old farmers as a man at all distinguished from those around him. Perfectly temperate in his habits, perfectly plain in his dress, entirely unassuming in his manners, he appears to be an old gentleman in fine health, whose thoughts are not turned upon his personal appearance, and who has no point about him to attract particular attention. In his intercourse with men, he is free, frank, and manly; he plays off none of the airs of some great men whom I have met. Any one may approach him as nearly as can be desired, and the more closely his character is examined the greater beauties it discloses.

"1. *He is an honest man.* I do not mean by that merely that he does not cheat or lie. I mean that he is a man that never dissembles, and who scorns all disguises. He neither acts a part among his friends for effect, nor assumes to be what he is not. Whenever he speaks you hear what he honestly believes; and, whether right or wrong, you feel assurance that he has expressed his real opinion. His dealings with men have been of the most varied character, and I have never heard his honest name stained by the breath of the slightest reproach.

"2. *He is a man of rare good judgment.* By no means possessed of that brilliancy of genius which attracts by its flashes, yet, like the meteor, expires even while you gaze upon it; by no means possessing that combination of talent which penetrates instantly the abstrusest subject, and measures its length and breadth as if by intuition, General Taylor yet has that order of intellect which more slowly but quite as surely masters all that it engages, and examines all the combinations of which the subject is susceptible. When he announces his conclusions, you feel confident that he well understands the ground upon which he plants himself, and you rest assured that the conclusion is the deduction of skill and sound sense faithfully applied to the matter in hand. It is this order of mind which has enabled him, unlike many other officers of the army, to attend to the wants of his family, by so using the means at his disposal as to surround himself in his old age with a handsome private fortune, and to be blessed with an almost perfect constitution. I would to-day prefer his advice in any matter of private interest—would take his opinion as to the value of an estate—would rather follow his suggestions in a scheme where property or capital was to be embarked, would pursue more confidently his counsel where the management of an army was involved, or the true honour of my country

was at stake, than that of any other man I have ever known. I regard his judgment as being first-rate at every thing, from a horse-trade up to a trade in human life upon the field of battle.

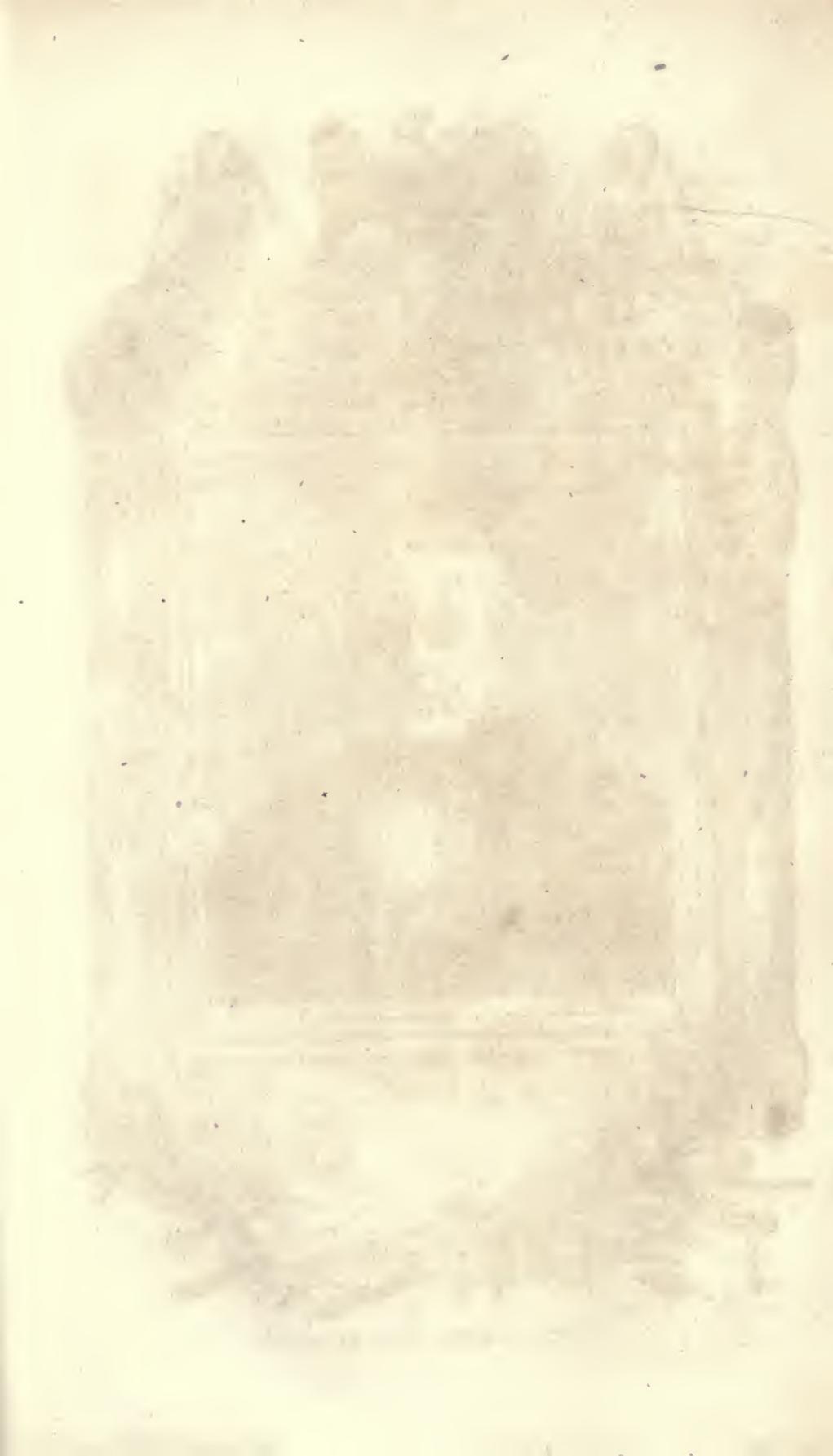
"3. He is a firm man and possessed of great energy of character. It were a waste of time to dwell upon these traits of his character, for his military career has afforded such abundant examples of his exercise of these qualities as to render them familiar to every citizen who has ever read or heard of the man. In his army they are daily exhibited, and stand conspicuously displayed in every order which emanates from his pen.

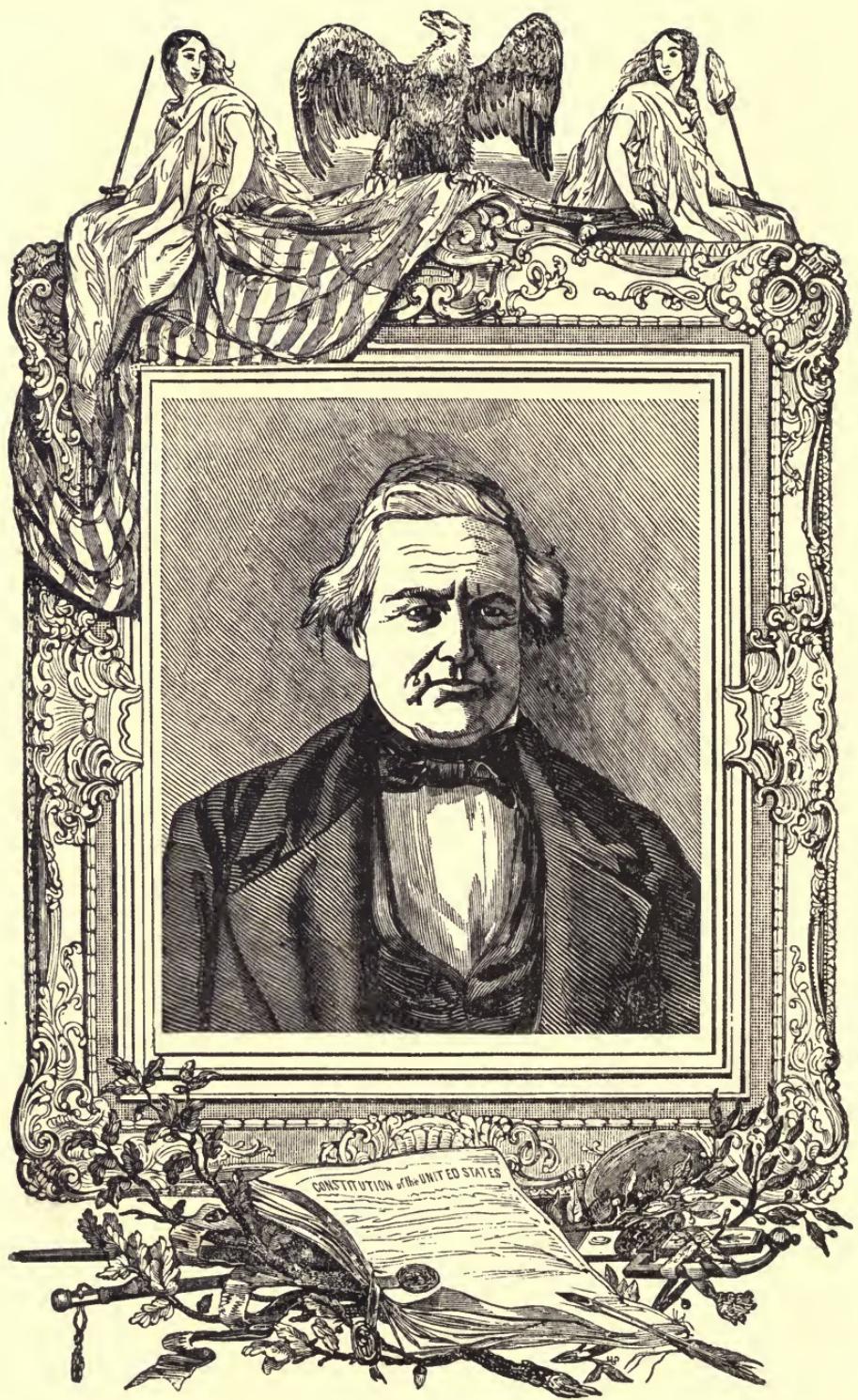
"4. He is a benevolent man. This quality has been uniformly displayed in his treatment of the prisoners who have been placed in his power by the vicissitudes of war. No man who had seen him after the battle of Buena Vista as he ordered the wagons to bring in the Mexican wounded from the battle-field, and heard him as he at once cautioned his own men that the wounded were to be treated with mercy, could doubt that he was alive to all the kinder impulses of our nature. The indiscretions of youth he chides with paternal kindness, yet with the decision which forbids their repetition ; and the young men of his army feel that it is a pleasure to gather around him, because there they are as welcome as though they visited the hearth-stone of their own home ; and they are always as freely invited to partake of what he has to offer as if they were under the roof of a father. His conduct in sparing the deserters who were captured at Buena Vista exhibited at the same time in a manner his benevolence and his judgment. 'Don't shoot them,' said he : 'the worst punishment I will inflict is to return them to the Mexican army.' When Napoleon said to one of his battalions, 'Inscribe it on their flag : No longer of the army of Italy,' he used an expression which was deemed so remarkable that history preserved it for the admiration of future ages ; yet it was not more forcible as an illustration of his power in touching the springs of human action than is that of General Taylor illustrative of the manner in which he would make an example for the benefit of the army.

"5. He is a man of business habits. I never have known General Taylor to give up a day to pleasure. I have never visited his quarters without seeing evidences of the industry with which he toiled. If his talented adjutant was surrounded with papers, so was the general. And though he would salute a visitor kindly, and bid him with familiar grace to amuse himself until he was at leisure, he never would interrupt the duties which his station called him to perform. When these were closed for the day, he seemed to enjoy, to a remarkable degree, the vivacity of young officers, and to be glad to mingle in their society. As a conversationist, I do not think General Taylor possesses great power. He uses few words, and expresses himself with energy and force, but not fluently. His language is select. I would say, however, from the knowledge of the man,

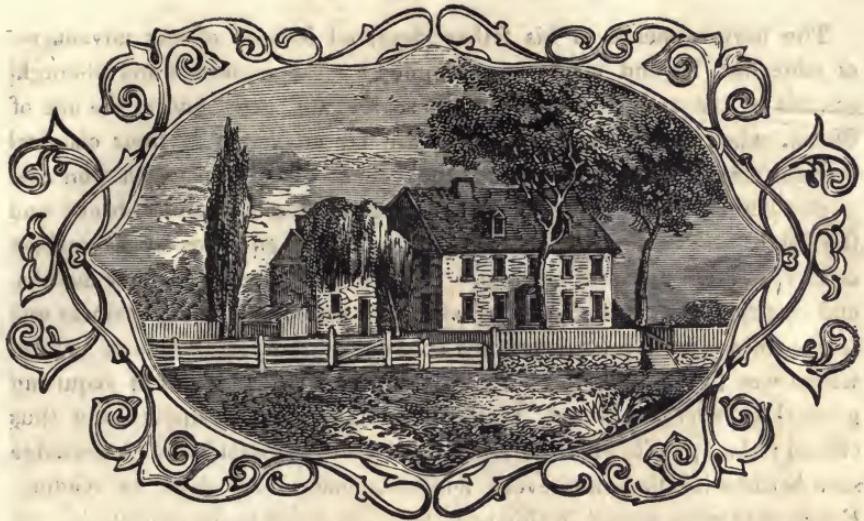
that he is entirely capable of producing any thing in the shape of an order or letter which has ever appeared over his signature ; and, in saying so much, I understand myself as asserting that he is master of his mother tongue, and can write about as effectively and handsomely as he can fight. Such, then, is the picture of the man—not of the general—who won my esteem. I am not in the habit of eulogizing men, and have indulged on this occasion because I desired to describe to you, with the exactness of truth, those qualities which, combined in General Taylor, made him appear to me *as a first-rate model of a true American character*. Others will dwell upon the chivalry he has so often displayed, and his greatness so conspicuously illustrated upon the field of battle. I formed my ideas of the man when he was free from duty, and had no motive to appear in any other light than such as was thrown upon him by nature, education, and principle."







HON. MILLARD FILLMORE.



LIFE AND PUBLIC SERVICES

OF

MILLARD FILLMORE.

Bancroft Library



HE history of Millard Fillmore affords a useful lesson, as showing what may be accomplished in the face of the greatest obstacles, by intellect, aided and controlled by energy, perseverance, and strict integrity, in a public and private capacity.

His father, Nathaniel Fillmore, is the son of one of like name, who served in the French war, and was a true Whig of the Revolution, proving his devotion to his country's cause by gallantly fighting as lieutenant under General Stark, in the battle of Bennington. He was born at Bennington, Vermont, in 1771, and early in life removed to what is now called Summer Hill, Cayuga county, New York, where Millard was born, January 7, 1800. He was a farmer, and soon after lost all his property by a bad title to one of the military lots he had purchased. About the year 1802, he removed to the town of Sempronius, now Niles, and lived there till 1819, when he removed to Erie county, where he still lives, cultivating a small farm with his own hands. He was a strong and uniform supporter of Jefferson, Madison, and Tompkins, and is now a true Whig.

The narrow means of his father deprived Millard of any advantages of education beyond what were afforded by the imperfect and ill-taught schools of the county. Books were scarce and dear, and at the age of fifteen, when more favoured youths are far advanced in their classical studies, or enjoying in colleges the benefit of well-furnished libraries, young Fillmore had read but little except his common school-books and the Bible. At that period he was sent into the then wilds of Livingston county, to learn the clothier-trade. He remained there about four months, and was then placed with another person to pursue the same business and wool-carding in the town where his father lived. A small village library, which was formed there soon after, gave him the first means of acquiring general knowledge through books. He improved the opportunity thus offered; the appetite grew by what it fed upon. The thirst for knowledge soon became insatiate, and every leisure moment was spent in reading. Four years were passed in this way, working at his trade, and storing his mind, during such hours as he could command, with the contents of books of history, biography, and travels. At the age of nineteen he fortunately made an acquaintance with the late Walter Wood, Esq., whom many will remember as one of the most estimable citizens of that county. Judge Wood was a man of wealth and great business capacity; he had an excellent law library, but did little professional business. He soon saw that under the rude exterior of the clothier's boy, were powers that only required proper development to raise the possessor to high distinction and usefulness, and advised him to quit his trade and study law. In reply to the objection of a lack of education, means and friends to aid him in a course of professional study, Judge Wood kindly offered to give him a place in his office, to advance money to defray his expenses, and wait until success in business should furnish the means of repayment. The offer was accepted. The apprentice boy bought his time; entered the office of Judge Wood, and for more than two years applied himself closely to business and to study. He read law and general literature, and studied and practised surveying.



EARING he should incur too large a debt to his benefactor, he taught school for three months in the year, and acquired the means of partially supporting himself. In the fall of 1821, he removed to the county of Erie, and the next spring entered a law office in Buffalo. There he sustained himself by teaching school, and continued his legal studies until the spring of 1823, when he was admitted to the Common Pleas, and commenced practice in the village of Aurora, where he remained until 1830, when he again removed to Buffalo, and has continued to reside there ever since.

His first entrance into public life was in January, 1829, when he took

MR. WILLIAMS ON HIS PARK



his seat as a member from Erie county, to which office he was re-elected the two following years.

His talents, integrity, and assiduous devotion to public business, soon won for him the confidence of the House in an unexampled degree. It was a common remark among the members, "If FILLMORE says it is right, we will vote for it."

The most important measure of a general nature that came up during his service in the State Legislature was, the bill to abolish Imprisonment for Debt. In behalf of that great and philanthropic measure, Mr. FILLMORE took an active part, urging with unanswerable arguments its justice and expediency, and, as a member of the committee on the subject, aiding to perfect its details. That portion of the bill relating to Justices' Courts was drafted by him, the remainder being the work of the Hon. John C. Spencer. The bill met with a fierce, unrelenting opposition at every step of its progress, and to MILLARD FILLMORE, as much as to any other man, are we indebted, for expunging from the statute book that relic of a cruel and barbarous age, Imprisonment for Debt.



E was elected to Congress in the year 1832.

The session of 1833-4 will long be remembered as the one in which that system of politics, known under the comprehensive name of Jacksonism, was fully developed. He took his seat in the stormy session of 1833-4, immediately succeeding the removal of the deposits. In those days, the business of the House and debates were led by old and experienced members—new ones, unless they enjoyed a widespread and almost national reputation, rarely taking an active and conspicuous part. Little chance, therefore, was afforded him as a member of the opposition, young and unassuming, of displaying those qualities that so eminently fit him for legislative usefulness. But the school was one admirably qualified more fully to develop and cultivate those powers which, under more favourable circumstances, have enabled him to render such varied and important services to his country.

As he has ever done in all the stations he has filled, he discharged his duty with scrupulous fidelity, never omitting, on all proper occasions, any effort to advance the interest of his constituents and the country, and winning the respect and confidence of all.

At the close of his term of service, he resumed the practice of his profession, which he pursued with distinguished reputation and success, until, yielding to the public voice, he consented to become a candidate, and was

re-elected to Congress, in the fall of 1836. The remarks above made in relation to his service in the Twenty-third Congress, will measurably apply to his second term. Jacksonism and the Pet Bank system had in the march of the "progressive Democracy," given place to Van Burenism and the Sub-Treasury. It was but another step towards the practical repudiation of old republican principles, and an advance to the Locofocoism of the present day. In this Congress, Mr. Fillmore took a more active part than he had during his first term, and on the assembling of the next Congress, to which he was re-elected by a largely increased majority, he was assigned a prominent place on what, next to that of Ways and Means, was justly anticipated would become the most important committee of the House—that on Elections. It was in this Congress that the famous contested New Jersey case came up. It would swell this brief biographical sketch to too great a length to enter upon the details of that case, and it is the less necessary to do so, inasmuch as the circumstances of the gross outrages then perpetrated by a party calling itself republican, and claiming to respect State Rights, must yet dwell in the recollection of every reader.



THE prominent part which Mr. Fillmore took in that case, his patient investigation of all its complicated, minute details, the clear, convincing manner in which he set forth the facts, the lofty and indignant eloquence with which he denounced the meditated wrong, all

strongly directed public attention to him as one of the ablest men of that Congress, distinguished, as it was, by the eminent ability and statesmanship of many of its members. Public indignation was awakened by the enormity of the outrage, and in that long catalogue of abuses and wrongs, which aroused a long-suffering people to action, and resulted in the signal overthrow of a corrupt and insolent dynasty, in 1840, the New Jersey case stood marked and conspicuous.

On the assembling of the next Congress, to which Mr. Fillmore was re-elected by a majority larger than was ever before given in his district, he was placed at the head of the Committee of Ways and Means. The duties of that station, always arduous and responsible, were at that time peculiarly so. A new administration had come into power, and found public affairs in a state of the greatest derangement. Accounts had been wrongly kept, peculation of every kind abounded in almost every department of the government, the revenue was inadequate to meet the ordinary expenses, the already large existing debt was rapidly swelling in

magnitude, commerce and manufactures were depressed, the currency was deranged, banks were embarrassed, and general distress pervaded the community. To bring order out of disorder, to replenish the national treasury, to provide means that would enable the government to meet the demands against it, and to pay off the debt, to revive the industry of the country, and restore its wonted prosperity; these were the tasks devolved upon the Committee of Ways and Means. To increase their difficulties, the minority, composed of that party that had brought the country and government into such a condition, instead of aiding to repair the evil they had done, uniformly opposed almost every means brought forward for relief, and too often their unavailing efforts were successfully aided by a treacherous Executive. But with an energy and devotion to the public weal, worthy of all admiration, Mr. Fillmore applied himself to the task, and, sustained by a majority whose enlightened patriotism has rarely been equalled and never surpassed, succeeded in its accomplishment.



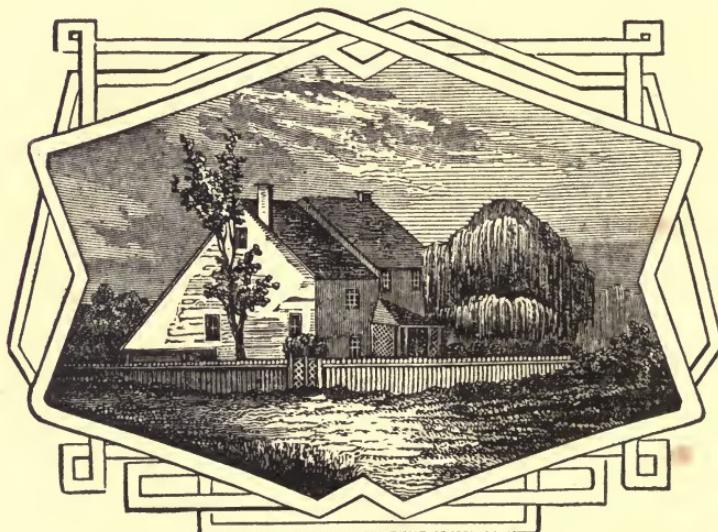
THE measures he brought forward, and sustained with matchless ability, speedily relieved the Government from its embarrassment, and have fully justified the most sanguine expectations of their benign influence upon the country at large. A new and more accurate system of keeping accounts, rendering them clear and intelligible, was introduced. The favouritism and peculation which had so long disgraced the departments and plundered the Treasury were checked by the requisition of contracts. The credit of the Government was restored, ample means were provided for the exigencies of the public service, and the payment of the National Debt incurred by the former administration. Commerce and manufactures revived, and prosperity and hope once more smiled upon the land. The country has too recently emerged from the disasters of Mr. Van Buren's Administration—it yet too keenly feels the suffering it then endured, and too justly appreciates the beneficent and wonderful change that has been wrought, to render more than allusion to these matters necessary. The labour of devising, explaining, and defending measures productive of such happy results was thrown chiefly on Mr. Fillmore. He was nobly sustained by his patriotic fellow Whigs; but on him, nevertheless, the main responsibility rested.

After his long and severe labours in the committee room—labours sufficiently arduous to break down any but one of an iron constitution,—sustained by a spirit that nothing could conquer, he was required to give his unremitting attention to the House, to make any explanation that might be asked, and be ready with a complete and triumphant refutation of every cavil or objection that the ingenious sophistry of a factious minority could devise. All this, too, was required to be done with promptness, clearness, dignity, and temper. For the proper performance of these varied duties,

few men are more happily qualified than Mr. Fillmore. At that fortunate age, when the physical and intellectual powers are displayed in the highest perfection, and the hasty impulses of youth, without any loss of its vigor, are brought under control of large experience in public affairs, with a mind capable of descending to minute details, as well as conceiving a grand system of national policy, calm and deliberate in judgment, self-possessed and fluent in debate, of dignified presence, never unmindful of the courtesies becoming social and public intercourse, and of political integrity unimpeachable, he was admirably fitted for the post of leader of the 27th Congress.

In 1844 he was selected as the Whig candidate for governor in New York, but in consequence of the Barnburners and Old Hunkers uniting their support upon the late Silas Wright, he failed to be elected. Confident, however, that he could command the strongest vote in New York, the Whigs again selected him as their candidate for Comptroller, in 1847, and succeeded in electing him by an unprecedented majority.

Such was the boy, and such is the man whom the Whigs present as their candidate for Vice-President. In every station in which he has been placed, he has shown himself "honest, capable, and faithful to the Constitution." He is emphatically one of the people. For all that he has and is, he is indebted, under God, to his own exertions.







MON. MILLARD FILLMORE.







